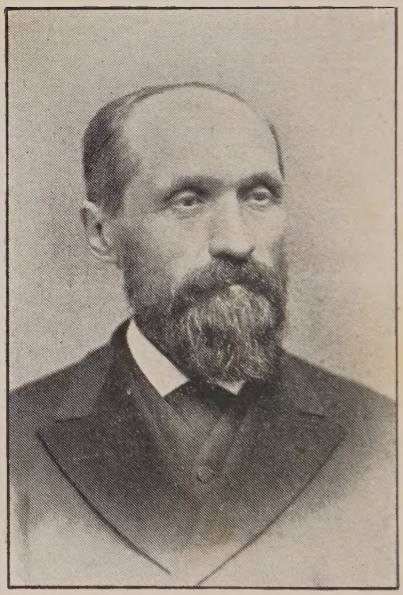
HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN VERSION OF THE BIBLE

To Father
from Son Charles,
Christmas, 1912.



Rev. J. P. Hentz, D. D.

HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN VERSION OF THE BIBLE

By

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"Twin Valley,"
etc.

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Dedication

This volume is dedicated by its author to his life-long and ever true friend, the distinguished Christian scholar and faithful laborer in our Divine Master's vineyard, the

Rev. J. L. Smith, D. D.

without whose unwearied and benevolent efforts this book would perhaps never have been published, at least not at this particular time and in its present attractive form.

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PREFACE.

This little volume makes no pretensions to profound erudition, critical acumen or eloquent diction. It simply tells in plain and unadorned language the story of Luther's translation of the Bible. Prepared with a special view to the use and information of people of average intelligence, such as can be found among the men and women of most any well conducted Christian household, all learned and critical discussions have been excluded from its pages.

In the land and in the language of Luther some well executed treatises have appeared on the subject of Luther's Bible; but as far as they have come to our notice, they are without a single exception written in a style too lofty and too abstruse to be adapted to the capacity of the humbler class of

readers. Among us, and in the English language, all that we have on the subject, is found in fragments only, scattered through many volumes. This treatise of ours, as far as we know, is the first attempt to present the subject matter in connected form and to bring it within the easy comprehension of plain readers. The book, therefore, we are inclined to think, will fill a place hitherto unoccupied. This, in addition to the fact that the subject is one of interest and importance and is deserving of our thoughtful consideration, is the apology which we have to offer for adding another to the many literary productions of our day.

The histories of translations made before and after that of Luther, and with which the latter stands intimately connected, have been added with the object of making the account fuller, more complete and more intelligible than could otherwise have been done.

It behooves us to add further, that in our efforts to gather the material for this brief and humble treatise, we have had recourse to the following learned authors and have gleaned from their writings much valuable information, viz: The Rev. Henry Eyster Jacobs, D. D., LL. D., of the Mt. Airy Lutheran Seminary, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; the Rev. William J. Mann, D. D., of the same institution; the Rev. Philip Schaff, D. D., of the Union Theological Seminary, New York City; the Rev. Wilibald Grimm, D. D., of Jena University, Germany, and a few others of equal distinction and prominence in the literary world.

This humble production is sent forth on its friendly errand, in the hope and with the earnest prayer that it may prove pleasing and profitable to all its readers.

J. P. H.

Dayton, Ohio.

The Wartburg, where Luther Translated the New Testament, 1521-1522.

INTRODUCTION.

The Protestant world is greatly indebted to the Reformation of the 16th century for many of the choicest blessings in which she is now rejoicing. It has delivered her from the tyranny and oppression of an arrogant and corrupt priesthood; from the idolatry of saint, relic and image worship; from the superstitious fear of purgatory, and from the false doctrine of justification from sin by self-wrought human works. It has secured for us pure sacraments, and that freedom of thought and conscience, that has become the creative and impelling cause of our modern spirit of inquiry and research; has brought about the present advancement of commerce and industry, of true science and the useful arts; and has been the chief agent in the social and

moral elevation of the masses of our day. But of all its marvelous and blessed fruits, Luther's translation of the Bible stands pre-eminent as one of the greatest and the best.

Luther began his work of translating the Holy Bible during the time of his imprisonment in the Wartburg. To this place the Elector Frederick, his friend and protector, had secretly caused him to be conveyed, having made him a captive while on his return journey from the Diet of Worms, that here he might rest safe from the wrath and vengeance of the pope and his zealous adherents. Here, in his captivity and isolation, he had leisure for literary labor. How was he to employ this idle time? What was he to undertake, as of first and greatest importance to the cause of God and the spiritual well-being of man? These were his thoughts as he sat meditating in his secluded room in Wartburg Castle. Total inac-

tivity was with him at any time, but especially so now, in the stirring events transpiring. a matter utterly out of question. To his active, busy spirit nothing could prove more irksome and unendurable than to be totally excluded from participation in the reformatory movement, which had been so auspiciously inaugurated. His soul was animated with a fiery zeal, for the honor of God and the salvation of his fellowmen, that would not suffer him to waste one moment in idleness. While thus situated, and while in this state of mind, his thoughts went back to the time, when in the university library at Erfurt, he had discovered a Latin copy of the Holy Scriptures. He recalled to mind how, by the reading of this best of all books, divine light had dawned upon his benighted soul, and how, from its contents, he had learned to know the way of life through faith in Jesus Christ. After a long and painful strug-

gle with an awakened and an accusing conscience, the Holy Word had brought peace to his troubled soul. Through its reading he had been made to feel the sweetness of sins forgiven, and the peace of reconciliation with an offended God. By recollections and reflections like these, he felt himself moved to place the precious treasure of the Divine Word in the hands of the German people in their own native tongue. For hitherto, no readable and true translation had been offered them. Some translations, it is true, had been made. A distinguished writer counts no less than fifteen of them, dating back to the time of Luther, and says of them all: "They had a common character, which may be expressed in a word – they were abominable." Priests and people were alike ignorant of God's truth and the way to salvation. Luther longed most earnestly to see a clearer and fuller knowledge and a better and happier

spiritual life prevailing among his well-loved German countrymen, than was the case now. He was therefore thoroughly convinced that for the accomplishment of this object, God's Word must be employed as the instrument. In the Holy Scriptures he recognized the germ and seed from which must come forth the spiritual regeneration and life of the German nation.

To plant this seed in their hearts, to place in their hands the Revealed Word, that therein they might find the way to God and heaven—this he felt himself called to do, this he recognized as his divinely imposed task here in his lone confinement.

It was on the first day of November, 1521, that he entered upon the work of translating the New Testament, and with such vigor and industry did he prosecute his chosen task, that by the following February after a brief space of three months, every portion of this

part of the Bible was rendered into pure and lucid German.

Soon after this he undertook and actively entered upon, the more extended and difficult task of translating the Old Testament. On his return from the Wartburg to Wittenberg he continued the work begun, and such were, again, the energy and persevering application with which he threw himself upon his labor, that by the year 1533 the wonderful and immortal work was completed. Twelve years did he spend upon the translation, amid various interruptions, and a multitude of other duties. There were friends and helpers who aided him by their own investigations and counsels, but the main burden of the work rested on him. The translation is emphatically his own. Untold labor and unwearied patience were required in its execution. Sometimes he was occupied a fortnight upon a single passage. That he might always hit upon the

Wittenberg as it Appeared in Luther's Time.

proper word, to express most correctly the sense of the original, he would go out upon the highways and fields, enter the workshops and slaughterhouses, and there converse with the people, inquire their names of things, and listen to their manner of speech. It was in this way and by this means, that he gathered information by which he was enabled to bring forth a version that spoke the language of his German countrymen in a manner which was intelligible to all, and at the same time conformed most closely to the sense and meaning of the original. But even after having gone to all this immense trouble, and after his work seemed done to perfection, he was not satisfied to rest from his labor. He made his Bible the work of his life, esteeming it evidently the most important of all he ever attempted. For many years, to even almost the end of his days, he continued to make changes and improvements in it, until at last it

stood forth a finished and perfect masterwork. It was a work not only perfect in itself, but a work also by which he had new created and perfected the German language. "The language of Germany has grown since Luther, but it has had no new creation. He who takes up Luther's Bible grasps a whole world in his hand, a world which will perish only, when this green earth itself shall pass away." Thus speaks of this wonderful translation, one who is counted among the most eminent sages of our age and country.

That Luther had not labored in behalf of an ungrateful people, was evidenced by the eagerness with which all held out the hand to receive Luther's Bible. There was a perfect crowding and scrambling for the new translation. The first edition of the New Testament, consisting of 3,000 copies was sold in less than three months. Edition followed edition, until by the year 1533 the

number of copies sold, ran up into the hundred thousands. The people read it while at their work. It was, on all occasions and at all places, the absorbing subject of their thoughts, and the chief theme of their conversation. Women and children even read and re-read it, until they had committed its contents to memory. No book ever enjoyed a popularity so widespread, or wrought impressions so deep and so enduring. There had arisen in Germany a desire for the Gospel, and especially for the Gospel in Luther's language, that nothing on earth was able to suppress or to arrest. The chief cause of this was, the re-awakened and quickened consciousness of the need of redemption and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. This conscious need could be satisfied by nothing else but the reading and hearing of the gracious Word of God. Since Luther gave his translation to the German people, many and great changes

have taken place. Manners, customs, laws, governments, pursuits and sciences have undergone changes, and with them has changed the German language. Attempts have accordingly been made to so alter and improve Luther's Bible as to conform its structure and words to these changes; but such is the love and veneration which the German people cherish for the unaltered Bible of Luther, that they will have no other. They reject every revision as an irreverent innovation. After a trial of 350 years Luther's Bible still retains the warmest place in their hearts. The Germans are not all Lutherans. They differ on the subject of religion. In our country they are found dispersed among all the numerous sects that have struck root into our soil. But however widely they may differ in their doctrinal views and teachings, on one thing they are harmonious and united. All make use of the Lutheran Bible,

and all profess to cherish for it equal love and reverence. An English Baptist may reject the authorized English version, but a German, be he Baptist or anything else, unreservedly endorses Luther's translation and unhesitatingly employs it in public and private worship. Luther's Bible forms a bond of union, strong and indissoluble, between all German speaking tribes and nations of the Protestant faith, wherever dispersed throughout the wide world.

Luther was a German in the fullest sense of the term, and has impressed on his work the stamp of his own German spirit and character. The book, upon every page, exhibits the depth and the sincerity of the feeling, the simplicity and joyousness of the faith, and the pious sentiment and chaste imagination, characteristic of the German people. The beautiful German language, so graceful, so pliable and so plastic, so rich and so suggestive, no one ever

knew how to touch and how to handle, with the skill of a master hand, as did Luther. He was master of all its treasures, its ruggedness and its tenderness, its fullness and its simplicity, its strength and its depth. Even his adversaries and opposers concede this fact and admire and praise his work. By his translation of the Holy Scriptures Luther has become the father and creator of the modern German language. He has reconstructed, enlarged and improved it to an extent that makes it a new language. By doing so he has rendered the German nation a service, which merits their everlasting gratitude.

But the greatest obligation, under which Luther has laid his nation, does not arise from his improvement of their language, but from the accuracy of his translation, as regards sense and thought. So pure and so faithful, so correct and so faultless, so clear and so

plain and so fully conformed to the Holy Spirit, is his rendering, that it makes its way directly to mind and heart. Our English version, in many instances, conforms more to the letter than the sense, more to the form than to the substance, of the original. It is too severely verbal and literal, and retains too much of the foreign idiom. Hence many of its passages are rendered unnecessarily obscure and awkward. Luther was less concerned about form and more about substance. He seized upon the sense and gave it in plain and intelligible German, in such form and order as he deemed best adapted to the purpose. He was a man of sincere and fervent piety, lived in close communion with the Savior, and was gifted with a profound insight into the deep things of God. With clear vision he penetrated divine mysteries to their profoundest depth. To him it was given, as to no uninspired man before him, to bring to

full light of day the hidden treasures of God's Word. This gift was not an accident. God had chosen and ordained him for this peculiar work, and had qualified him for it, both by education and by endowing him with needful talents. It was by means of the firm and fervid faith which the Spirit had wrought in him, by means of the ardent love for the Redeemer which had come to him from above, and by means of the light and guidance of the Holy Ghost, that he was enabled to open to his people the long closed and sealed up sacred treasure, and to give it a true and proper form.

These are the reasons that account for the fact, that in Luther's day, his Bible was received with so much openness of hand and so much gladness of heart, and that our fathers clung to it with so much ardor of affection. At no price were they willing to part with the sacred treasure. Luther's Bible

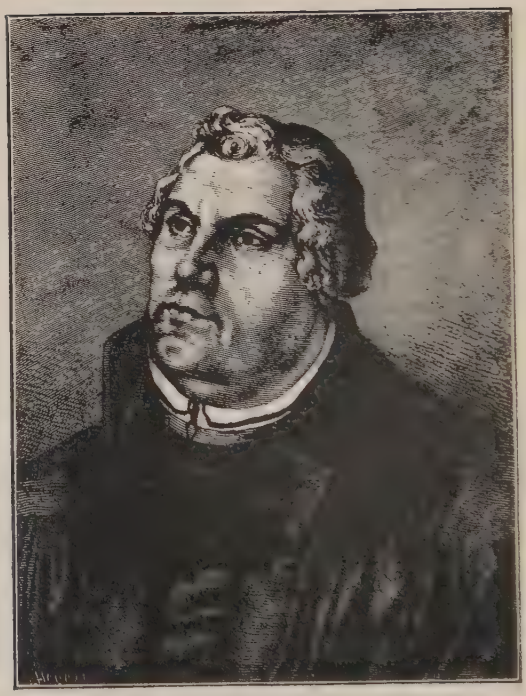
contributed more than all else to the furtherance and success of the Reformation. It laid a sure and safe foundation for the superstructure of the renewed and purified church of Christ. It awakened and produced a reformation of individual souls, and with that of the church as a collective body. This tree of life, of faith and of hope, has now endured for near four hundred years, it has ever risen higher and extended wider, until now other countries are gathered under its branches and other nations recline under its shadow. Germans are a wandering people, a cosmopolitan nation. They are found dispersed over all parts of the habitable earth. But wherever their migrations lead them, thither they carry with them their Lutheran Bible. The precious Book is their companion at home and abroad, on seas and on land, in good and in evil days.

Vast and marvelous have been the

changes that have occurred during the last 300 years. Many a work, once the admiration of the world, has fallen into neglect and decay and crumbled into dust and ashes. No such fate has befallen the work wrought by Luther. Amidst change and death on all sides, his Bible, by God's gracious providence, has been preserved to us unharmed and undefiled to this day. We are the sons of the sires of the Reformation; to us Luther's Bible has come as an inheritance and a legacy, a legacy worthy of our most earnest love and deserving of our highest veneration. To think lightly of it would be to degrade ourselves. To neglect itwould be to harm ourselves. For the sake of our Lutheran Bible, it seems to us, we ought to seek to keep alive as long as possible, and extend and spread as far as opportunity offers, the language of the Fatherland, of Luther, and of Luther's Bible. It seems to us that every Lutheran theologian, at

least, should feel himself moved to read and understand God's holy, sanctifying and saving Word, in the language of the world's greatest reformer. God's Word is precious, very precious, not only in the German, but equally in every other language. May its divine precepts and heaven-born doctrines become ever more the rule of men's faith and the guide of their lives. May it become the aim of all, diligently, day by day, to search the Scriptures; and by personal experience may they find that therein they have eternal life.

It is this translation and others more or less intimately connected with it, of which we propose to treat in the following pages.



Martin Luther.

CHAPTER I.

MARTIN LUTHER.

Luther was born November 10, 1483, in the town of Eisleben, Saxony. His parents were John and Margaret Luther. They were poor but intelligent and respectable people of the more well-to-do and better sort of the German Peasantry. The father was a miner by occupation, who, by his own industry and the assistance of his diligent and frugal housewife, by degrees acquired a considerable amount of property and raised himself to an honored social position among his fellow-townsmen. According to the Reformer's own statement, all his ancestors were peasants. Both parents were strict disciplinarians, and in true German fashion, were not sparing of the rod in the training

of their son. The boy, Martin, even in his early childhood, exhibited signs of unusual intellectual talents. For this reason his father destined him for professional life, in the sphere of the civil law. Having removed from Eisleben to Mansfeld, the parents here sent the boy to the public school so early that he often had to be carried in the arms of friends to reach the schoolhouse. In 1497, at the age of fourteen, he was sent to a higher institution in the city of Madgeburg, where, however, he remained but one year, at the expiration of which time, he was transferred to Eisenach. At this place he continued four years engaged in most diligent and uninterrupted study. At this time his father was still unable to give the boy more than a mere pittance of pecuniary assistance. The son, therefore, was under necessity of having recourse to a practice, then prevalent among impecunious youths in institutions of learn-

LUTHER HOUSE (THE COTTA RESIDENCE) IN EISENACH.

ing, to sing from door to door of the citizens for the necessaries of life. The boys would club together and thus pass through the town from day to day. They would also visit neighboring villages on their piteous errand. By this means it happened that the young Martin attracted the notice of good Frau Cotta of Eisenach. It was his sweet voice, his devout manner and his pleasant and intelligent countenance that won him the kind heart of this noble lady. She received him into her own home and treated him as she did her own children. Here all his wants were abundantly supplied, and he enjoyed the advantages of Christian influence and of cultivated and refined society. The impressions he here received had a most salutary effect on his entire afterlife. Nor can we doubt that he was guided to this home by the directing hand of an Allwise and Beneficent Providence.

In 1501, at the age of eighteen years, he left Eisenach and went to Erfurt, where he entered the university of that city, which was then the most celebrated of the learned institutions of Germany. Here he devoted himself assiduously to philosophy and the study of the classics. He also gave attention to the natural sciences, as far as they were then taught. One of his favorite pursuits now, as it had been before, was his practice of music. To this he gave his leisure hours. Indeed it seems to have been his sole recreation. Music was to him an accomplishment and an art which he never ceased to love to the end of his days. In 1502 he took his first degree, and in 1505 his second, or master's degree. He was then in his 22nd year. He now took up the law, not so much from personal choice and inclination, as from obedience to his father's wish. But his studies in this department were unexpectedly interrupted, or rather en-

tirely broken off, by a change in his inner religious life. As a consequence, he felt himself induced, without the knowledge and consent of his father, to enter the Augustinian Monastery of Erfurt in July, 1505. Here he distinguished himself by further diligent study, and the severest ascetic practices. He had become conscious of his sinful and lost condition, and had sought but not found peace of soul by his own unaided efforts. By the advice of the pious Vicar General Staupitz he was led to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and the writings of the ancient Church Fathers, especially those of St. Augustine. In this pursuit, after a long and painful struggle, by the aid of Divine grace, he finally attained to peace of conscience, through faith in Jesus Christ as the only Mediator and Saviour of sinful man.

In 1507 he was ordained a priest, and, owing to a sense of his unworthiness,

much against his own inclination. The next year, in 1508, at the age of 25, he was called to a professorship in the recently established University of Wittenberg, where at first he taught philosophy, and later Scriptural Theology. In 1511 he was sent to Rome in the interest of his own monastic order, but remained there but one month. He remained long enough, however, to witness in all their hideous reality, the levity and immorality which prevailed at the papal court and which pained and distressed, beyond measure, his pure and virtuous soul.

In 1512 he was made a doctor of divinity, which at that time was not, as it is now, a meaningless title of honor, but the designation of a teacher of theology. Luther, instead of lecturing on the peculiar theology of the age, which was an unedifying and mystical scholasticism, began and continued by expounding the Holy Scriptures, an entirely

new mode, which soon gained him a national reputation, and attracted students from far and near. In 1515 he was appointed provincial vicar of his monastic order, a position which required him to oversee eleven convents and to perform the customary visitations, quite a burdensome vocation. From this office, however, he was soon again suffered to retire.

About this time also, i. e., in 1512, his reading brought him under the influence of the writings of some of the so-called Mystics, such as John Tauler, Thomas A. Kempis and others, which produced a powerful effect on his views and on his whole after-life.

In 1517 events transpired which led him in open conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities. The Dominican Monk Tetzel came to Yuterbock, a town on the borders of Saxony and near Wittenberg, to push the sale of indulgences. Indulgences are written certificates,

granting forgiveness of sin for the payment of money, and are issued in the name and by the authority of the Pope. This was a scandalous proceeding and produced a most demoralizing effect. If forgiveness could be purchased with money, sin and crime might be committed without fear or hesitation. The criminal law of the land became a nullity, and all civil authority was set at defiance. No one, neither God nor man, but the Pope alone, need to be feared. When Luther heard of Tetzel's proceedings, his soul was stirred within him to its intensest indignation. He denounced the nefarious practice from the pulpit, and this remaining fruitless, he proposed a public discussion on the subject. For this purpose, on October 31, 1517, he nailed to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg ninety-five theses, or short sentences, which were directed against the indulgence traffic. Though moderate in tone, their

effect was as unexpected as it was important. In fourteen days they were diffused throughout all Germany, and within a month more they were known throughout all Europe. They were approved by some and condemned by others. Tetzel and his friends replied by speech and writing, in threatening and abusive language. Luther answered their assaults with great mildness and forbearance. Thus the controversy, by which the Reformation was inaugurated, took its start. As it advanced and grew in warmth and interest, Luther's mind underwent a gradual change. His eyes were opened to the real character of the Papacy, and he receded ever further from the principles of the Roman Church. Luther was no radical. He was by nature conservative. He was not able at once to break with the Pope. While contending against papal errors he retained for some time the utmost regard for the Roman Pontiff. He even

addressed to him an humble apology for the agitation which he had unintentionally called forth, without, however, receding in the least from the position which he had assumed.

Soon he was cited to appear in Rome to answer for his opposition to papal authority. Against this the Saxon Elector earnestly protested. He mistrusted Rome. He demanded that if Luther must be tried, it be done on German and not Italian soil. This ended the persecution for the time being. The breach widened with several discussions, none of which were of Luther's seeking. One of these took place in Augsburg in 1518, and another at Leipsic in 1519. Then came from Rome Luther's ex-communication, in which destruction was declared against his writings, and death against his person. Such documents at that time carried with them an omnipotent significance. No earthly power had ever dared to

gainsay or resist them. But Luther treated this one with utmost scorn and contempt. In presence of his students and associate professors, near the Elster gate at Wittenberg, he committed the papal bull to the flames. This was a bold act and required the greatest courage. The defiance implied in it aroused the fiercest rage in the Pope and his adherents. But their anger was powerless, owing to the protection which the Elector extended to the bold Reformer within his own territory.

A great national diet was now announced, to be held in the city of Worms, during the year 1521. Luther was cited to appear at this diet to answer to the charges preferred against him as a teacher of heresy and an agitator of sedition, and he complied with the citation. There were present at this diet, the Emperor, six electors, an Archduke, twenty-seven Dukes, two Landgraves, five Margraves and numerous

Counts, archbishops and bishops. The galleries, doors and windows were crowded with a promiscuous multitude. The eyes of all this vast assembly were riveted on the Monk of Wittenberg as he entered the hall of the diet. And there in presence of this august body, Luther stood up to answer for the faith that was in him. It was a spectacle and a trial such as the world as ever witnessed but few. The date was April 17th and 18th, 1521, an epoch, we may term it, in the history of the world. Luther offered a courageous and eloquent defense of himself, his teachings and his writings, maintaining above all the God-given freedom of conscience over against the tyrannical pretensions and unholy usurpations of the Papacy, and ending with the memorable words: *"Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise; So help me God!"*

On his return from Worms, May 4th, 1521, he was seized by friends in dis-

MELANCHTHON ASSISTING LUTHER IN TRANSLATING.

guise and carried to the Wartburg for security, where he employed his time in the preparation of various works for publication, but chiefly in the translation of the New Testament, which he finished before he quitted his retreat in March, 1522. During his absence from Wittenberg religious fanatics had come to the town, and, by their perverted teachings, had created serious disturbances. Luther hastened to the rescue. In a series of sermons, which he delivered daily during one entire week, he completely quelled the disturbance. This done, he entered upon the revision of his New Testament translation, calling to his assistance Melanchthon and other scholars of the university faculty. After this he began his labors on the Old Testament, which he finished in 1533.

From 1522 forward his labors outside of the university were manifold and diversified. He answered the attack

made on him by Henry VIII of England, composed and published hymns for public worship, some thirty-six in number, and occupied himself in the suppression of the Peasant War which was being waged during 1524 and 1525. June 13th, 1525, at the age of 42 years, he entered into marriage with Catharine Von Bora, who had previously been a nun, and with whom he lived in happy union until his death. In 1527, under the direction of the Saxon Elector, he was engaged in visiting the churches of the Electorate. Discovering great ignorance in matters of religion, both among clergy and laity, these visitations became the occasion of new works. He published sermons to serve as models to the preachers. He further composed his larger catechism for the instruction of the youth in both school and home. But as this was not adapted to the capacity of either parents or children, he prepared for their use the

Coburg Castle, Where Luther Resided While the Augsburg Diet was Convened and Where He Labored on His Translation of the Old Testament, 1530.

smaller catechism. Both catechisms appeared in print in 1529. In the same year was held a conference at Marburg between the Lutheran and Swiss Reformers, with the object of forming a union btween them. This attempt proved a failure.

In 1530, the historic diet of Augsburg convened, religiously the most eventful during the period of the Reformation. As the papal ban, sanctioned by the diet of Worms, still hung suspended over the head of Luther, his life was not safe outside the electoral dominions. For this reason he did not dare to appear at Augsburg. He came as near to it, however, as it was safe for him to do, to the city and castle of Coburg. Here he remained while the diet was in session, and here his friends found means to communicate with him. From this place he co-operated with Melanchthon, who was in Augsburg engaged in the preparation of the Augsburg confes-

sion. Every article of this document was laid before him, for his correction and approval, until it was finished and presented to the Emperor and the diet. While Melanchthon gave the confession its form and shape, and in one sense may be said to be its author, Luther furnished material and offered suggestions, which became substance and part of it, and therefore, in another sense the latter may be said to be its author. Justice demands, however, that the honor of its merits should be shared equally by both the Reformers.

In succeeding years repeated negotiations were conducted and meetings held with Protestant divines, to compare views and to conciliate divergences, in which Luther participated. One of these was that with Bucer, held at Wittenberg in 1536, in which the latter came to a full agreement with the Lutheran theologians, from whom he had previously differed. Another was held

in the same year also in Wittenberg, with the Anglican theologians, Fox, Heath and Barnes, which, while attaining no immediate results, greatly influenced the confession and mode of worship of the Anglican church. In 1537 the Schmalkald articles were framed, mainly by Luther's hand. These proved of such a character as forever to expel all hope of reconciliation with the Papacy. For this reason they did not please Melanchthon, though he attached his name to them. Luther was active also in the preparation of church orders, exegetical and controversial treatises and in adjusting various church difficulties and disputes.

The great man ended his days February 18th, 1546, at Eisleben, his birthplace, where he had gone to adjust some difficulties which had arisen between the counts of Mansfeld. His last words were, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord

God of truth." His remains were interred in front of the altar in the castle church at Wittenberg, where they have reposed in undisturbed rest to this day.

LUTHER'S ACTIVITY AND VERSATILITY.

Luther's life was one of intense activity. His reformatory efforts extend over a period of about thirty years. All this time he labored as professor in the university, preparing and delivering daily lectures to the students. He preached on every Lord's Day and frequently on every day of the week His correspondence was immense, his letters at times running up in number to one hundred a day. He attended conventions and meetings without number, some at great distance from his home. He traveled over many thousands of miles and as often on foot as by conveyance. The calls made on him by men

from far and near were very numerous, and consumed much of his time. He suffered from frequent attacks of sickness, when he was compelled to rest from his labors. His home and family affairs claimed much of his time and care. The translation of the Bible alone would have required the entire lifetime of most any other man, yet amidst all these labors and interruptions the productions that flowed from his pen are so numerous as to astonish and amaze us and make us stare with a look of incredulity. Of these Prof. Stowe says: "From 1517 to 1526, the first ten years of the Reformation, the number of his publications was 300; from 1527 to 1536, the second decade, the number was 232; from 1537 to 1546, the year of his death, the number was 183; his first book was published in November, 1517, and he died in February, 1546, an interval of 29 years and 4 months. In this time he published 715 volumes, an average of

more than 25 a year. He continued his labors to the very last. The six weeks immediately preceding his death, he issued 31 publications from the press, an average of more than five a week. The complete catalogue of all his works, Latin and German, comprises 24 folio pages, closely printed." If, as has been said, genius is a capacity for work, Luther takes the rank of perhaps the greatest genius of all time. His genius, as displayed in his writings, comprises all subjects,—theology, history, politics, education, literature, poetry and music. In every department he seems equally at home, and his views are expressed at times with peculiar eloquence and power. On every topic his thoughts are original and sketched with a masterly hand. Luther's unsurpassed diligence in the labors of his calling arose from the indwelling fervor of his devotion to the cause of Christ and his church, and

from the ardor of his love for human souls.

LUTHER'S DOCTRINES.

The leading principles of Luther's theology may be briefly stated as follows:

1.

"The entire corruption of human nature by sin, the consequent wrath and condemnation, and natural inability for self-recovery or response to first approaches of divine grace.

2.

God's grace and mercy proceed entirely from his free will, and not from any preceding disposition of sinful man. In his earlier years, Luther taught absolute predestination.

3.

The vicarious sufferings of Christ as the price of man's redemption, the suf-

ferings of the human nature having acquired infinite efficacy by its union with the divine nature in the one divine human person.

4.

Justification is not an internal change in man, but is an external act of God alone, whereby, for the sake of Christ's merits received by faith, he forgives sin and pronounces sinful man righteous.

5.

Faith is a work of the Holy Ghost in man, wrought through the means of grace, and its essential factor is personal confidence in the merits of Christ.

6.

The means of grace are the Word and the Sacraments, which are inseparably attended by the Holy Spirit, so that they are never without efficacy, although

this efficacy does not work so as to save those who repel the Spirit's approaches.

7.

Baptism is a means both of regeneration and renewal. Those who after baptism, fall from baptismal grace, return by faith to the covenant first made in baptism. All repentance is a return to baptism.

8.

Christ is present in the Eucharist in both natures, the human and the divine, in, with and under the elements of bread and wine, and is so received by all communicants, the believer receiving him to his salvation, and the unbeliever to his condemnation.

9.

The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the final judge of all controversies, but everything in the

constitution and worship of the church not contrary to the Scriptures, is to be retained and thankfully used.

10.

In the New Testament, besides the High Priesthood of our High Priest, Jesus Christ, there exists only the spiritual priesthood of all believers, since they have access to Christ directly, and without the mediation of saints, angels or any priestly order.

11.

The ministry and priesthood are therefore distinct institutions. The ministry belongs to the whole church, but its duties are to be exercised only by those who are duly called, and set apart to this purpose. In exceptional cases, however, the power inherent in any Christian congregation may admit of the arising anew from within."

CHAPTER II.

THE BIBLE.

The word, Bible, is derived from the Greek word, Biblia, which is a plural noun, and in its original sense signifies books, but by usage it has received a singular designation, and is now understood to mean, the Book, or Book of Books. It is supposed to have been first applied to the collected sacred scriptures during the fifth century of our era, since which time it has been adopted in many, perhaps in all languages into which the scriptures have been translated. The Bible is divided into two chief parts, the Old Testament and the New, and contains sixty-six books, thirty-nine of which belong to the Old Testament, and twenty-seven to the New. Originally these were its only

divisions. The further divisions into chapters and verses date to a later time, and were adopted for the sake of convenience, to facilitate reference to any of its parts. The system of chapters was devised by Cardinal Hugo about the middle of the thirteenth century. The system of verses owes its origin to Robert Stephans, a distinguished publisher of Paris, France, and was by him introduced into an edition of the Vulgate Version in 1551, and although not always wisely made, has since been generally adopted. The headings of chapters, announcing the subject matter, are an addition not found in the original.

Originally the Bible was written in three different languages, the Hebrew, the Aramean, and the Greek. In Aramean there are but two books, the book of Daniel and part of the book of Ezra. All the other books of the Old Testament are written in the Hebrew. Those of the New Testament are all written in

Greek. The Scriptures were prepared in various localities and in different ages, by writers who lived far apart in time and in space They were men of almost every social rank. Some were statesmen and others were peasants; some were kings and others were herdsmen; some fishermen, priests, tax-gatherers and tentmakers; some educated and others uneducated; some were Jews and others were Gentiles. The period during which these writings were produced embraces fully sixteen hundred years. But after all this great variety, the Scriptures constitute but one book, dealing with one main and leading subject, in its numberless objects and relations, the subject of man's redemption. The same spirit pervades all its parts, the same faith, the same truths, the same duties are taught throughout its pages. Such harmony preserved under such varying circumstances, and for such length of time, can be rationally

accounted for upon the one supposition only, that all the writers were taught and governed by the one Holy and Omniscient Spirit of God. The Scriptures are of Heaven and not of earth; of divine and not of human origin. Holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

At what time the different sacred books were collected into one volume is not definitely known at present. The Old Testament canon was complete before the advent of Christ. The Apocrypha were published with the other books, and were held in high esteem, but were not looked upon as divinely inspired productions. Most probably among the Jews a sacred archive was maintained from the beginning of their independent national existence, into which all the inspired books were deposited for safe-keeping, as they came from the hands of their authors, and

were there carefully watched over and preserved for the use of future ages.

The New Testament books, or copies of the originals, had to be collected one by one from the various localities to which they had been originally sent by their authors. Next in order their authenticity and divine authority had to be carefully examined and passed upon, before they could be combined into one volume, and sent forth as the Word of God. Of the precise time and date when this was done we are not informed. Yet we are not altogether left in the dark as to this fact. Thus we know of a Latin translation, called the Itala, which existed toward the end of the second century. From citations of this translation, which appear in the writings of the early Christian Fathers, we learn that the Itala contained all the books that now make up the New Testament. Moreover, in the year 1740 there was discovered in the Ambrosian Li-

brary in Milan, Italy, a list of New Testament Scriptures, which dates back to the latter half of the second century, and in which all the books, belonging to the New Testament Canon, are enumerated as divinely inspired productions. From these facts it is safe to conclude that the New Testament Canon was completed, and that all the books of the Bible as we now have them, were collected into one body, sometime before the close of the second century.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY TRANSLATIONS.

The translation of the Scriptures by Luther was not the first of its kind. It had its predecessors, which were more or less closely connected with one another, one the outgrowth and successor of the other, until they culminated in that of Luther. We will therefore begin with the first of these translations known to us, and then pass on to its successors, one by one, until we reach the time and work of Luther. The first of them known to us is

THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION.

This is a translation of the Old Testament Scriptures from the Hebrew into the Greek language. Septuagint means

seventy, and the term is applied to the translation because it was supposed anciently that seventy men were employed on it. The story, as given by Aristeas is as follows: Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, wished to add a copy of the book of the Jewish law to his library at Alexandria, and for this purpose sent to Jerusalem to the high priest, Eleazar, to ask for a copy, and for competent persons to translate it into Greek. Seventy-two men, six from each tribe, were thereupon sent to Egypt, and after seventy-two days spent in translating, the first five books of the Pentateuch were completed, the translators having assisted each other. Later accounts introduce miraculous elements into the story, especially that given by Josephus, the Jewish historian. Justin Martyr tells us that each man was shut up alone in a cell to translate the Old Testament unaided, and that when the results were compared they were found to agree in

every point. But later investigations have proven that all these and similar accounts are mere legends, and for historical purposes are untrustworthy and worthless.

The real facts in the case are these. Alexandria after the dispersion, became a center of Jewish population, and eventually also of Jewish religion. But as time went on the Jews, under Greek influence, lost command of the Hebrew and spoke Greek only, and therefore required a translation of their books into Greek. This they, and not Ptolemy undertook. The men who met this want differed much in knowledge and skill, and were of an indeterminate number, not seventy, nor seventy-two. They labored at different periods, beginning in 280 B. C. with the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus and continuing at the work until 150 B. C. The translators were chiefly Jews of Alexandrian birth and training, and therefore strongly

hellenistic, of which fact the translation furnishes abundant evidence.

The Septuagint is the earliest translation known to us of any part of the Holy Scriptures and though in many parts defective and inaccurate, has served useful ends and good purposes. To the student and translator of the Hebrew Scriptures it has served as an interpreter and been of very great advantage. By its means the Gentile world was introduced to a knowledge of the writings of Moses and the Prophets, the Gentiles understanding Greek, which was then a kind of international language. Many, no doubt, were thus prepared for the reception of the Christian religion, when proclaimed to them by the Apostles and their associates and successors. It was useful even to the Jews in Palestine at the time of Christ. That they understood Greek better than their own Hebrew appears from the fact that most of the quota-

tions of the Old Testament found in the New and some attributed to Christ, are taken from the Septuagint.

The next version in age is

VETUS LATINA.

This is a Latin version of the Old Testament Scriptures, which was made from the Septuagint, and named "Old Latin," being the first made Latin translation. It originated in Northern Africa, which was at the time a Roman province. The precise date when it came into existence is not known, but, being quoted by the earliest Latin fathers, this event must have occurred during the early part of the second century. Being the only Latin copy of the Scriptures it circulated far and wide throughout Northern Africa. But being made in the deteriorated dialect spoken in that part of the Roman empire, it was received with disfavor in Italy when in-

troduced there. Here Greek was well known, and when the translation was compared with its Greek original, the Septuagint, it was found to be an inaccurate rendering. Further, a higher culture prevailed in Italy than in Africa. Hence, the Vetus Latina, both on account of its faulty rendering and its provincial rudeness of dialect, gave offence to the Italians and, as a consequence, they demanded a new version. The Latina was thereupon taken in hand by learned men and by them corrected and improved to such an extent as to prove a new version. This latter received the name and title of Itala, or Italian Version of the Old Testament.

THE ITALA.

The Itala was not only a great improvement of the Latina, but also an enlargement of it. For there was added to it a Latin translation of the books of

LUTHER READS THE BIBLE TO THE ELECTOR JOHN THE CONSTANT.

the New Testament. By this addition the Itala became the first complete collection into one body of both the Old and the New Testament Scriptures. It was made before the close of the second century, and remained in use among the Latin-speaking populations for a long time. But as time passed it lost much of its authority and influence. Not a good translation when it was made, by frequent copying it at last had become so corrupt as to be unfit for use. There was, therefore, urgent need for thorough revision. At this crisis God himself came to the help of the church and raised up the man to do the required work. This man was the distinguished church father, Jerome. With this we have come to the next version,

THE LATIN VULGATE.

The author of this translation was Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, com-

monly called Jerome. Of all the Christian Fathers this man was the most erudite and scholarly. He was born in Stridon in Dalmatia, a town which no longer exists, about 340 A. D. After studying with his father, Eusebius, who was a learned Christian teacher, he went to Rome, where he was instructed in the Greek language, in philosophy, and in Roman literature. He was baptized by the Roman Bishop, Liberius, in 360. About 373, he quitted Rome and went to Antioch in Syria, where he tarried until 374. Here it is related, Christ appeared to him in a dream, and addressed him, saying, "Jerome, thou art not a Christian, but a Ciceronian." This influenced him from this time forth, to devote himself entirely to ecclesiastical studies. A fever, which attacked him at Antioch, gave his mind a strong impulse toward asceticism, and he retired to the wastes of Cholcis, southeast of Antioch. But his constitution, naturally weak, proved

unable to bear up under the severe habits of abstinence and penance, which he here practiced. He therefore left the place and returned to Antioch. Arrived here he was made presbyter in 379, much against his will. From Antioch he went to Constantinople, to sit at the feet of the learned Gregory Nazianzen and from here he returned a second time to Rome in 382. Here he studied and labored with great diligence. In some way the Roman bishop, Damasius, heard of him and sought his acquaintance; and recognizing his talents, and perceiving his industry, he became warmly attached to him and aided him in his studies and writings.

It was here in Rome, where a company of women gathered around him to listen to his exposition of the Scriptures, and to be prepared by him for a conventual life. With two of their number, Paula and her daughter, Eustochium, he went on a pilgrimage to the

Holy Land in 385. Arriving there, he retired to a hermit cell in the vicinity of Bethlehem. A convent, over which Paula presided, was soon erected, and an inn for pilgrims. Here Jerome remained until his death, engaged in devotion and in literary labors. He was a zealous advocate of the perpetual virginity of the Virgin Mary, of the meritoriousness of fasting and celibacy, and the worship of martyrs and relics. Strange as it may seem, these errors made their appearance in the church during the beginning of the second century, soon after the death of the last of the Apostles, and have maintained themselves in the Roman Communion until this day. Some of the most able and spiritual of the church fathers advocated them in opinion and in practice. Though given to this erratic course, Jerome proved himself a very useful and deserving man. He was the translator of the Vulgate Version, and the author

of devotional and theological books. He brought out the distinction between the Canon and the Apocrypha. The latter, he says, the church reads for the edification of the people, but not for confirming the authority of ecclesiastical doctrine. His letters, which are many, are also important. They answer questions of conscience, commend monastic life, comfort the sorrowing, and condemn the vices and follies of the day.

Luther, though cheerfully acknowledging Jerome's merits, disliked him on account of his monkery. He says: "I know no teacher to whom I am so hostile as I am to Jerome. He writes only of fasting, of meats, and of virginity. If only he had insisted upon the works of faith and practiced them. But he teaches nothing about faith, or love, or hope, or the works of faith."

Jerome was well qualified for the translation of the Scriptures. He was the most learned Christian scholar, not

only of his day, but of many centuries. He was amply prepared linguistically through his thorough acquaintance with Latin, Greek and Hebrew; and morally and spiritually by his piety. Damasius, bishop of Rome from 366 to 384, recognizing Jerome's fitness and realizing the necessity of a new translation of the Scriptures, requested him to undertake the work. He began his labors in Rome in 383, and finished the translation of the entire Bible in Bethlehem in 404. Portions of it were done in great haste, and there are errors, which with more care, he would not have made, but as a monument of linguistic power, his translation of the Old Testament, stands unrivalled and unique.

Jerome's translation, although by some used at once, when finished spread very slowly and gradually. Centuries passed before it attained to general circulation in the West of Europe. No one befriended it. Bishop Damasius,

the mover of it, had died before it was completed in 384. It had to win its way by its own merit, and not until the ninth century was its victory complete. Owing to Jerome's defective eyesight, which obliged him to employ an amanuensis, as also through frequent transcriptions, the text had become badly corrupted by the eighth century. Charlemagne, in 802, ordered Alcuin, the most learned man of his day, and his trusted friend, to revise the Latin text, which he did with some degree of success. As the years passed other versions were made, some for better and others for worse. After all its various vicissitudes, its most glorious day came at last. Printing was invented about 1450, and the first book sent out by the press was the Latin Bible. Copies of it were quickly multiplied, until in a short time it attained a more widespread circulation than it had ever en-

joyed before. No other book was more frequently printed.

Its improvement was now begun anew, and with greater earnestness and ability than ever before. Cardinal Ximenes of Spain, 1437-1517, in his complutensian polyglot, begun 1502 and finished in 1517, made the first serious attempt to revise the text. There was felt the necessity of an authorized edition, one having the approval of the highest authority of the church. This the Council of Trent, Anti-Reformation, demanded in 1546. The work was accordingly undertaken by the then ruling Pope Sixtus, and was issued in 1590. This, according to the decision of the highest Roman Catholic authority, was to be the final edition of the version. Its text, by the Papal constitution, was declared to be "true, lawful, authentic, unquestioned in all public and private discussion, reading, preaching, and explanation." The printing of any other

text was forbidden under penalty of excommunication. But new errors had slipped in, and others had remained uncorrected. So the papal infallibility was set aside, and another version made, the issue of which appeared in 1592, and was called the Clementine, after Pope Clement, the 8th, under whose pontificate it was made. This is the last revision made of the Vulgate Bible, and this the Roman church esteems of the same, or even, higher, authority than the original Hebrew or Greek. Recently there has once more been some talk of revision, but up to this time nothing practical has developed. Sure it is, however, that there is another revision required.

We have thus spoken at some length of this revision because of its importance. This arises from these facts. For a thousand years, at least, it was the only scriptural version in general use among the people of the Latin Church,

which then comprehended nearly all Europe. It was the Bible which Luther discovered in the university library of Erfurt, and from which he learned the way of salvation by faith alone in Jesus Christ. It was the book from which the first English translation was made by Wycliffe, and which was consulted by the numerous Bible translators of the 16th century. It has borne a large share in shaping the form and language of the German, English and other modern versions of the sacred Scriptures.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOTHIC TRANSLATION BY ULFILAS.

This is an isolated version, having neither predecessor nor successor. It is here introduced, not because it has any connection with the version made by Luther, but simply because it was the first effort of translating the Scriptures into the German language. It was made by the Gothic Bishop Ulfilas during the fourth century.

The Goths were a German tribe, who had their seat in northeast Germany, at the dawn of our era, from whence they emigrated southward, as far as the present Hungary and settled on the River Theiss, and eastward as far as the northern coast of the Black Sea. In the middle of the third century they

broke up their settlement here and entered the Roman empire. In their wanderings we find them at one time in Greece, and at another in Asia Minor, always restless, and ever warlike and destructive. Encountering the Roman armies, they sometimes conquered them, and sometimes were conquered by them. They were at last driven back westward and reached the Roman province Dacia, which they conquered and occupied for some time, and where in turn, about the year 375, they were conquered by the Huns, another warlike and barbarian tribe. At this time, already they were divided into sections, the East and West Goths. The latter went westward and spread themselves over southern France and Spain. Their possessions in France they soon lost again, but in Spain they maintained their rule until the eighth century, when in the invasion of their country by the Mohammedans, they lost their independence and disappeared

forever as an empire and a nation. The East Goths after freeing themselves from the yoke of the Huns, toward the close of the fifth century, under their leader, Theodoric The Great, founded the East Gothic empire, which embraced Italy, Sicily, Salmatia, and southern France. They had by this time become highly civilized, and maintained a prosperous and beneficent rule. But after an existence of but fifty years, their empire fell to pieces, their rule ended and their name and nationality vanished from among the nations.

These people, as early as the fourth century, abandoned heathenism, and embraced the Christian religion. They were the first German tribe who were converted to Christianity. Their apostle was Ulfilas, who was the son of Christian parents, 311-381. He was a man of upright character and a diligent and faithful Christian laborer. He translated the Scriptures into the Gothic lan-

guage, a German dialect for which he invented a new alphabet, which he constructed out of Greek, Latin and Runic characters. His translation embraced the entire Bible, with the exception of the four books of the Kings, which, owing to their warlike character, he considered as dangerous to a people like the Goths, already too much given to war and bloodshed. The greater part of the Old Testament of his version has come down to us, but not much of the New.

Ulfilas belonged to the then widespread sect of the Arians. Their peculiarity was that they believed God the Son to be inferior to God the Father, by which they called in question the divinity of the second person of the Godhead, a very serious and dangerous heresy. But of this error there is no trace in the version of Ulfilas, which is so faithfully and skillfully executed that even the finer shades of the original are happily brought out. The version

is made from the Greek text, and therefore has critical weight. Thus it happened that the translation of the Scriptures became the first monument of German literature. Twelve hundred years later another sacred translation became the greatest and most glorious monument of the same language for all time.

That Ulfilas was a man who was highly esteemed, and enjoyed the confidence of men of the highest station in the Church, is evidenced by the fact, that in 341 he was ordained bishop by Eusebius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who, like himself, was an adherent of the Arian doctrine.

Owing to the wide extent of the Gothic empire, the version of Ulfilas was widely circulated, and exerted a great and highly beneficent influence. Eventually, however, it was entirely lost sight of for centuries, until in the latter part of the 16th century, Anton Morilon reported having seen at a Monastery in

the town of Werden, Westphalia, a Gothic codex from which he copied the Lord's Prayer. This is supposed to have been what is known as the Codex Argenteus, which dates back to the sixth century, and is one of great value and beauty. After this it must have found its way into Bohemia. For in 1648, during the siege of Prague by the Swedes, it was re-discovered in that city, and from thence taken to Sweden. It is now in the university library in Upsala, and is regarded as the most precious treasure of that celebrated institution. It is written upon purple parchment, in gold and silver letters.

We count the Gothic version by Ulfilas among the German versions and rightly so, but it is not from thence to be inferred that Germans of the present day can easily read and readily understand it. The German language since the time of Ulfilas, has undergone great transformations, and has become an al-

most entirely different tongue. The antiquarian philologist alone, is able to trace the connection between the old and the new, and to translate the ancient into the modern.

CHAPTER V.

SOME ANCIENT VERSIONS.

Of these, beside those spoken of above, there are a considerable number. None of them have, however, any connection with that of Luther. Luther, most likely did not know them, certainly did not consult them. They are, the Samaritan Pentateuch, which was made many years before the time of Christ; the Peshito, a very old Syrian translation; the Coptic, the Ethiopian, the Arabian and the Armenian. The last four are of somewhat later date than the former, and all of them contain parts only of the Bible. At a still later time, Slavonian, Polish, Russian, and other translations were executed, unknown to Luther.

EARLY GERMAN EFFORTS.

After the time of Ulfilas centuries of stormy times passed over Europe and for a long time we find no further traces of attempts at Scriptural translations into the German language. Meanwhile, however, the Christian religion penetrated deeper and deeper into Germany, and found an ever growing lodgment in the hearts of the German people. It was then that there was awakened an interest in the sacred Scriptures and fragments of them were produced in the German language. They were taken from the Gospels, from the Psalms and other books. In the 9th century, a poetic gospel harmony appeared, the production of a Westphalian monk, which was a life of Christ, under the title of Haliland, i. e., Heiland or Saviour. This was composed in rhyme. About the same time Otfried of Weisenburg in Alsatia, a Benedictine monk, versified

the gospel history in the Allemanian dialect in 1500 verses, divided into stanzas, each stanza containing four lines. Neither production was a literal translation, but for the time being they served as vernacular Bibles to these people, but recently emerged from barbarism. Other efforts of a like nature were made, but neither important nor successful enough to be mentioned in this connection.

PAPAL DISFAVOR.

It is no wonder that so little was done at that time to give the people the Bible in their own tongue. The sad fact is that as the papal influence and power increased, so the attention and regard for the Bible decreased. The pope at an early date, interdicted the reading of the Scriptures by the laity. In the 11th century, already Pope Gregory the 7th, issued a prohibition to this effect, and

ever since there has not arisen a Pope who has favored the reading of God's word by the common people. It was determined by papal Rome, that all the religious thinking and believing of the nations should be made dependent, not on God's word, but on the dictation of pope and priest.

After the art of printing was invented, numerous versions of the Bible appeared in Germany in print and were offered for sale. But they were all hastily and carelessly made and were neither readable nor true translations. Luther consulted none of them. According to Dr. John Stoughton, the first of these Bibles appeared in 1466. Dr. Krauth states that when Luther began his translation they had multiplied to fifteen in number. But there existed one translation before the time of Luther, which deserves mention in this connection. This is the so-called Mediaeval Bible, supposed to date back to the 13th cen-

tury. It was made from the Vulgate. Time, place and author of it are unknown. By some it is ascribed to Waldensian origin, but with no convincing proof. It was long a question of dispute whether Luther had consulted and made use of this version. Professor Dr. Krafft of Bonn claims that Luther had it before him and made use of it when engaged in his translation. In proof of his assertion he produces parallel passages from the two versions, Luther's and the Mediaeval, and it must be confessed that they bear a most striking resemblance. But as this can happen undesignedly and unconsciously where two translations are equally correctly made, and as Luther nowhere speaks of this Mediaeval version, we are left to conjecture in regard to his use of it.

The origin of the Mediaeval Bible is still unknown. Protestant scholars, who have given the subject their atten-

tion, claim a Waldensian authorship for it. Catholic scholars, on the other hand, assign it a Catholic origin. The reasons advanced by either party in support of their position do not make it clear which is the correct view. The version itself is a pretty fair translation of the Vulgate, including, of course, all its faults and imperfections. With all its merits it had, by the time of Luther, grown antiquated, and had become of little use to the common reader.

According to a statement of Dr. Wilibald Grimm, fourteen of those German versions which were in circulation at the beginning of the Reformation are still extant, and numerous copies of them are still found distributed through various public and private libraries. The same writer also assumes it as a fact that the said versions are not versions, not original and independent translations, as was formerly supposed, but mere copies, or editions, of the ver-

sion of the 13th century, known as the Mediaeval Bible. They were all made after the year 1450, the year in which the art of printing was invented, the first one appearing in the year 1466 and the last one in 1522. They were of no great value and of no assistance whatever to Luther in his work of translating. As regards their literary execution, Dr. Krauth, a very competent authority, pronounces them all abominable. Their defects, however, were not so much owing to the incompetency of their authors, as to the barbarous condition of the German language before the time of Luther. Further, none of these editions give the names of their authors. This omission, so unusual, is plausibly accounted for by the supposition that they were made by priests and monks who feared to make public their identity. Rome did not approve of work like theirs and was ever ready to visit her displeasure on all who had the hard-

ihood to attempt it. That these editions, in many points, vary from one another, as also from the original, is doubtless owing to the fact that each author made such changes in his copy as the peculiar dialect of his district and other local conditions seemed to him to demand.

CHAPTER VI.

WRITING AND PRINTING.

At this point of our narrative we deem it proper to offer a statement, regarding the manner of recording facts and events. Anciently, writing was done by means of hieroglyphics, pictures being used where we now use letters, as when the picture of the sun is made to represent day, and that of the moon to represent night. To this succeeded writing by means of letters, which was a vast improvement on the former mode. At what time and by whom letters were invented and came into use, cannot be determined at present. According to an ancient tradition, we are indebted to the people of Phoenicia for this useful art, but the claim rests on no solid foundation. The oldest

of this kind of writing, extant, is that of Moses, as we have it in the Old Testament of our Sacred Scriptures. This dates back to a period about 1500 years anterior to the time of Christ. From this time until the 15th century of our era, a period of about 3,000 years, all writing had to be done by hand, which is a slow and laborious process. As a consequence books were few in number and high in price. Writing and reading during this time were rare accomplishments, and were confined to a few specially favored persons. During the mediaeval period the monasteries were almost the only places where writing was known and practiced. There were kings then, and priests, and even bishops, who could not as much as write their own names. So expensive were the productions of the pen, at that time, that a well-executed copy of the Bible commanded a price of from 500 to 1,000 dollars. The wealthiest persons only

were able to procure so valuable a treasure. But a change came at last. About the middle of the 15th century, John Guttenberg of Mainz, Germany, invented the art of printing with movable letters. From this time forward books were rapidly multiplied, and became much reduced in price. By means of the printing press a new era was ushered in. By multiplying and cheapening books, it created a powerful stimulus to intellectual activity, such as had never been known to exist before. From all stations and spheres of society, men turned their attention to reading, study and inquiry in a manner hitherto unknown. As a result a numerous class of able writers and learned authors arose, where before supreme intellectual stupor and indifference to mental culture had ruled. This newly awakened spirit of inquiry, among other objects, took its direction in favor of church and religion. Great corruption was discov-

ered in this sphere, in places high and low. The whole religious body was diseased from head to foot. Hence arose from all directions the demand for reform. This demand would not have become as urgent and as dominant had the printing press not come into use. As thus printing became one of the agencies to lead to a demand for a reformation in church and religion, so, when the work of reformation had been inaugurated, it proved itself a most efficient aid in its further advancement and ultimate success. Without the printing press the Scriptures could not have been put into the hands of the masses, perhaps would not have been translated in the vernacular, and thus the Bible would have remained a closed volume to the majority of the common people. Nor can we resist the conviction, that the invention of printing just at this time, on the eve of one of the most momentous epochs of human history, was owing to anything

but the special agency and design of an allwise and benign Providence. Humanly speaking, the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century could not have succeeded without the aid of the printing press.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LUTHERAN VERSION.

Briefly stated, this is a German translation of the entire Bible, which had the Reformer, Martin Luther, for its author, was made from the Hebrew and Greek languages, in which the Scriptures were originally written, was begun in 1521, and completed in 1533, the first complete copy being issued from the press in 1534.

LUTHER'S QUALIFICATIONS.

Luther was endowed by nature and education with a rare combination of gifts for a Bible translator. He had made himself familiar with the original languages, the Hebrew and the Greek, and with the Latin he was as conversant

as with his own native German. He was a perfect master of the vernacular, had full faith in the revealed Word of God, an enthusiastic attachment to the Gospel, and a clear insight into the deep things of God. He was energetic and persevering in all he undertook, regardless of difficulty and opposition. A good translation must be true in sense to the original, and so faithful to the idiom of the vernacular as to read like an original work. These characteristics we find in Luther's version. The reputation also which he had already acquired as an author, at once commanded universal attention to his version.

There were men living who were abler linguists than he was, such as Melanchthon, Erasmus, and Reuchlin, but his command of Greek and Hebrew was sufficient to form an independent judgment, and if need be, he was prepared to proceed in his labor without assistance. Peter Mosolanus, who presided at the

discussion in Leipsic, in 1519, says of Luther: "His voice is melodious, his learning and knowledge of Scripture are so extraordinary, that he has nearly everything at his finger ends. Greek and Hebrew he understands sufficiently well to give his judgment on interpretation." He had given attention to the languages of Scripture years before he entered on his translation. In the monastery in Erfurt already he had begun their study, and had prosecuted it diligently ever since. From the Wartburg he writes to Spalatin: "Bibliam, Graecam, Hebraicam lego." Dr. Schaff says: "Melanchthon was master of the ancient languages, Luther of the German. The former, by his co-operation, secured accuracy to the German Bible, the latter idiomatic force and poetic beauty." In the German tongue, Luther had no rival. Here he was supreme master. He created, so to speak, the modern High German and imparted to it shape and

form. He combined the official language of the government with that of the common people. As he himself says: He listened to the speech of the mother at home, the children in the street, the men and women in the market, the butcher and tradesmen in the shop, and looked them on the mouth when speaking to discover the most intelligible terms. His native genius for poetry and music enabled him to produce the rhythm and melody of Hebrew poetry and prose. But his crowning qualification was his intuitive insight and spiritual sympathy with the contents of the Bible. He himself says in his letter to Link, "A good translation requires a truly devout, faithful, diligent, experienced and practical heart."

PROGRESS OF LUTHER'S VERSION.

While a student at the University of Erfurt, Luther, for the first time, met

LUTHER DISCOVERS THE LATIN BIBLE IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY AT ERFURT, 1505.

with a copy of the Bible. It was the Latin Vulgate. In this book he found great delight, and from this time forth made it his chief study. It taught him theology, and nourished his spiritual life. He next applied himself to the acquisition of the original languages for the purpose of its better understanding. His first attempt at translating he made with portions of the Psalms, which he published in March, 1517. After this he translated other sections, some taken from the New Testament and others from the Old. All these he accompanied by popular comments. This work was so well done, and met with such favor that his friends urged him to translate the whole Bible, which accordingly he resolved to do.

With the needed leisure on hand at the Wartburg, he began with the New Testament, entering on his task in December, 1521, and finishing his labor in March, 1522. Returning to Wittenberg

about the same time, he applied himself to its thorough revision, employing for the purpose Melanchthon as his assistant.

Sturz of Erfurt was consulted about coins and measures. The crown jewels, through Spalatin's intervention, were borrowed, in order that a better conception of the precious stones described in the book of Revelation might be formed. The translation was then hurried through the press, and made its appearance in 1522. The first edition appeared without the name of its author. The title of it was: Das Neue Testament, Deutsch, Wittenberg. It had wood-cuts by the elder Cranach, one at the beginning of each book, and twenty-one in the Apocalypse. It retained the division into chapters of the Latin Bible, originally devised by Cardinal Hugo. The division of chapters into verses was not yet known. It did not come into use until 1555, and therefore

does not appear in this, and any of Luther's editions published during his lifetime. Luther changed the order of the epistles, in which order his version differs from the English. A month later a second edition was required, and made its appearance, which contained many corrections and improvements. After completing his translation of the New Testament Luther at once proceeded to the more difficult task of translating the Old Testament, and published it in parts, as they were ready. In spite of numerous interruptions, the Pentateuch was completed within three months from the publication of the New Testament, and appeared at the beginning of the next year. In 1524 two parts of the work were published, the former comprising the historical books, and the latter, Job, the Psalms, and the so-called writings of Solomon. Other important engagements frequently intervening delayed the completion of the Canonical

books until 1532, and the Apocrypha until 1534, when the first edition of the complete translation was published.

COLLEGIUM PUBLICUM.

As the work progressed Luther founded a Collegium Publicum, or Bible Club, which was made up of himself and a number of his learned friends and associates. Of this company Mathesius speaks as follows: "This is one of the greatest miracles which our Lord has caused to be performed, by Dr. Martin Luther before the end of the world, that he giveth us Germans a very beautiful version of the Bible, and explaineth to us his eternal divine nature, and his merciful will, in good intelligible German words."

"When the whole German Bible had been completed, Dr. Luther began anew, to revise it with great zeal, industry and prayer. And as the Son of God had

LUTHER'S PUBLICUM COLLEGIUM OR BIBLE CLUB. 1533.

promised, that where two or three were gathered together in his name, he would be in the midst of them, he caused a Sanhedrim, as it were, of the best people then about him, to assemble weekly, for a few hours after supper at his house, namely, Dr. Bugenhagen, Dr. Justus Jonas, Dr. Kreuziger, Melanchthon, Aurogallus, and also George Rorer, the corrector. These were frequently joined by strange doctors, and other learned men, Dr. Bernhard Ziegler, Dr. Forstenius and others."

"After our doctor had looked through the published Bible, and consulted Jews and foreign philologists, and had inquired among old German persons for fitting German words, he joined the above assembly with his Latin and New German Bible. He had also the Hebrew text always with him. Melanchthon brought the Greek text, Dr. Kreuziger, both the Hebrew and Chaldee Bibles. The professors had several tables

besides them, and Dr. Pommer had also a Latin text before him. Everyone had previously prepared himself by studying the text. Then Luther as president proposed a passage and collected the votes, and heard what each one had to say on it, according to the peculiarity of the language, and the interpretation of the old doctors."

Often the work became tedious, days being spent upon a few lines, Job being particularly difficult. Sometimes they scarcely mastered three lines of this book in four days, and hunted two, three and four weeks for one word.

It is a cause of regret that no record has been kept of the discussions of this remarkable company. Mathesius, who evidently speaks from personal knowledge, tells us, that wonderfully beautiful and instructive speeches were made.

At last the whole Bible, including the Apocrypha, as books not equal to the Holy Scriptures, yet useful and good to

read, was completed in 1533, and published in 1534, with numerous woodcuts. Meanwhile the New Testament was printed and circulated, by various unauthorized persons in numerous editions. Some sixteen of these irresponsible editions appeared in a few years. They were full of errors, which caused Luther to utter loud complaints. He continued unceasingly to amend and improve his translation. He corrected errors, improved the uncouth orthography, purged the vocabulary of obscure and ignoble words, and made the whole more symmetrical and melodious. He prepared five original editions or recensions of the whole Bible, the last one in 1545, the year before his death.

EDITIONS AND RECENSIONS.

The printed text of Luther did not long remain in the condition in which it came from his hands. In that regard

it met with the fate of the older translations, the Itala and the Vulgate. It passed through innumerable changes, some of which were improvements, and others misimprovements. Obsolete words were removed, the inflexions and orthography were modernized, the division into verses was introduced, the spurious clause of the three witnesses was added (I. John 5:7), and the third and fourth books of Ezra, and the third book of Maccabees were likewise added to the Apocrypha. Other changes besides these were made, some for better and some for worse. Gradually many recensions came into use, differing from one another in various minor points. The most carefully made of these was that of the Canstein Bible Institute, of which we will speak in detail on a subsequent page.

THE SUCCESS OF LUTHER'S BIBLE.

Luther's Bible met with a most enthusiastic reception, and proved a great and effectual help to the Reformation. In ducal Saxony, in Bavaria, and in Austria, its sale was strictly prohibited by the ruling heads of these countries. But even here its spread could not be arrested. The people everywhere wanted Luther's Bible. Hans Luft, a Wittenberg publisher, in forty years, from 1534 to 1574 sold about one hundred thousand copies, which was an enormous number for that age. It was read by millions. The actual number sold is beyond estimate, and the effects of its reading were marvelous. To this fact even the adversaries of the Reformation bear testimony. Cochlaeus, the zealous champion of Romanism, and bitter opponent of the Reformation, complainingly cries out, that Luther's Testament was so much multiplied and

spread by printers, that even tailors and shoemakers, yea even women and ignorant persons, who had accepted the Lutheran gospel, and could read a little German, studied it with the greatest avidity as the fountain of all truth. Some, he says, committed it to memory, and carried it about them in their bosoms. In a few months, he asserts, such people deemed themselves so learned that they were not ashamed to dispute about faith and the gospel, and this they did not only with Catholic laymen, but even with priests and monks, and with doctors of divinity, and he owns, that they did it successfully.

ROMAN EFFORTS AT TRANSLATING.

Owing to the success of Luther's Bible, and their own loss in prestige and influence as a consequence, the Papists found themselves forced in self-defense to issue rival translations. One by

Emser in 1527, another by Dietenberger in 1534, and still another by Eck in 1537. These translations were accompanied by annotations. They slavishly conformed to the Vulgate, were stiff and heavy, and were in large part literal transcriptions of Luther's translation. Luther could in truth say: "The Papists steal my German, of which they knew little before, and they do not thank me for it, but rather use it against me." These early Catholic versions have long since gone out of use even in the Roman church, while Luther's still lives.

CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF LUTHER'S VERSION.

Luther's version is to be judged by the time in which, and the circumstances under which, it was made. Let us look at these for a moment. At that time no good grammars, dictionaries,

and concordances existed. Hebrew and Greek scholarship was in a crude state. The German language was in a barbarous condition. Luther had to meet all these and other defects. Is it any wonder he felt much discouraged. On January 13, 1522, he writes to his friend Amsdorf, that he had undertaken a work which was beyond his power, and that he could not succeed in it without the assistance of his friends. The great difficulty he met with was in Job and the Hebrew Prophets. He did not know how to make them speak in the barbarous German tongue. Walch reports him as saying: Ach Gott, wie ein gross und verdriesslich Werk ist es, die hebraeischen Schreiber su zwingen deutsch zu reden. Wie straeuben sie sich, und wollen ihre hebraeische Art gar nicht verlassen, und dem groben Deutschen nachfolgen, gleich als wenn eine Nachtigall sollte ihre liebliche Melodien verlassen und dem Kukuk nach-

singen. He also jocosely remarked, that Job would have become more impatient at the blunders of his translators than at the long speeches of his miserable comforters. There is this also to be added, that with all his labors and perplexities, Luther made no pecuniary gains. While publishers and printers made fortunes by the sale of his Bible, he himself never received nor asked a copper for this great work of his life.

The Hebrew text was in fairly good condition, but not so the Greek. The science of textual criticism was not yet born. The materials for it were not yet collected from the manuscripts, ancient versions and patristic quotations Luther had to use the first printed editions, chiefly those by Erasmus. He had no access to manuscripts, the most important of which were not yet even discovered. They did not become available until the middle of the nineteenth century. As for biblical geog-

raphy and archaeology, they were yet in their infancy. Many names and phrases could not be understood at all.

That under these circumstances a number of mistakes and inaccuracies should appear in Luther's version, should not surprise us. The only wonder is that they are as few as they are. They occur in greatest number in Job and the Prophets, who present even to the most advanced Hebrew scholars of our day many unsolved problems of text and reading.

THE TEXTS USED BY LUTHER.

On this part of our subject our chief authorities are Drs. Schaff and Krauth, both divines of vast erudition. Dr. Schaff is authority for the following: "The basis of Luther's version of the Old Testament was what is known as the Massoretic text, as published by Gerson Ben Mosheh at Breccia in

1494. He used also the Septuagint, the Vulgate of Jerome, the Latin translation of the Dominican Sanctes Paguini of Lucca, 1527, also the Glossa Ordinaria by the Franciscan, Sebastian Minister of 1534. The basis for the New Testament was the second edition of Erasmus, published at Basel, Switzerland, in 1519. The first edition of the Greek Testament by Erasmus had appeared in 1516, just one year before the Reformation. He derived his text from a few mediaeval manuscripts. The second edition, though much more correct than the first, is disfigured by a large number of typographical errors. He laid the foundation for the Textus Receptus, which was brought into its mature shape by Robert Stephans, in his Royal Edition of 1550, and which maintained the supremacy till Lachman inaugurated the adoption of the older textual basis, 1831."

Dr. Krauth makes these statements:

"Luther did not translate from the Vulgate, though he used that ancient and important translation with sound judgment. It was of right the most important aid, next to the sacred text itself. He used the Basel edition of 1519.

There is no decisive reason for thinking that Luther used any manuscripts of the Greek text. The Greek texts which had been published or at least printed when Luther was engaged in his translation of the New Testament were:

1. The Complutensian, folio, printed in 1514, but not published till 1522-1523. Doubts have been expressed as to Luther having used the Complutensian, to which some force is given by his nowhere citing it. Yet Melanchthon, his great coworker in the New Testament, cites it during Luther's lifetime. The copy, which was sent to the Elector of Saxony, was placed in the library at Wittenberg, whence it was removed two

Luther House in Wittenberg, Where Luther Continued and Finished His Translation of the Bible, 1522-1533.

years after Luther's death to Jena. His not citing it is no evidence over against the irresistible presumption of the case; and Krell, 1664, asserts positively that Luther was familiar with the Complutensian polyglot.

II. The first Erasmus, 1516, folio.

III. The Aldine, 1518, folio. The Septuagint in this edition was used by Luther.

IV. The second Erasmus, 1519, folio.

V. The Gerbelius, based on the second Erasmus, and the Aldine, 1521-1524.

VI. The third Erasmus, 1522, folio.

It is evident that Luther's choice was confined, at first, to the editions of Erasmus 2-3. The Complutensian and Erasmus' third edition appeared too late for his earlier New Testament translation."

In making his translation Luther did not slavishly follow the Greek of Eras-

mus. In many places he conformed to the Latin Vulgate which is based on an older text. He also omitted, even in his last edition, the famous interpolation of the heavenly witnesses in I John 5:7, which Erasmus inserted in his third edition, 1522, against his better judgment.

THE COMPLUTENSIAN BIBLE.

This is a polyglot in six volumes, folio, so called from Complutum, the Latin name of Alcala in Spain, where it was printed. It contained the original texts, the Vulgate, the Septuagint, the Targum of Onkelos on the Pentateuch, the last two with a literal Latin translation. It was projected by Cardinal Ximenes, a Spaniard, who spent about $150,000 upon it. It was commenced in 1502, printed between 1514 and 1517, and authorized by Leo X in 1520, but apparently not circulated be-

fore 1522. Only 600 copies were printed, which were sold at $20.00 per copy. A copy purchased for Union Theological Seminary in New York City in 1883 cost about $750.

THE GERMAN RENDERING.

The German language was in wretched condition. It was divided into as many dialects as there were states, in fact, each town and village had its own dialect, and knew no other. None of these served as a bond of union. The North German did not understand the South German, nor the South German the North German. Every author wrote in the dialect of his own district. As to orthography, there was no established rule or authority, everybody did as seemed good in his sight. In his preface to his version of the Pentateuch, 1523, Luther says: "I have so far read no book or letter, in which the German

language is properly handled. Nobody seems to care sufficiently for it. Every preacher thinks he has the right to change it at pleasure, and to invent new terms." Owing to this confusion scholars preferred to write in Latin, and when they attempted to use the mother tongue, as some did occasionally, they failed to express themselves with becoming ease and grace. Luther in this effected a great change. He brought order out of confusion, and made modern High German the book language. As the basis of it he chose the Saxon dialect, which was in use at the Saxon Court, and in diplomatic intercourse between the emperor and the estates. But it was bureaucratic, stiff, heavy, involved, dragging, and unwieldy. Luther changed and popularized it and adapted it to theology and religion. He enriched it with the vocabulary of the German Mystics, chroniclers and poets. He rendered it intelligible to the com-

mon people of all parts of Germany. The words he adapted to the capacity of the people, so as to be understood by the unlearned as well as the learned. He was more concerned for the substance than the form. The Hebrew shekel he turned into silberling; the Greek drachma and Roman denarius into the German groschen; the quadrams into heller; the Hebrew measures into scheffel, malter, tonne, and centner. The Roman centurion he turned into hauptman. All these are terms which do not strictly represent the original, but they are terms which are understood by a German.

He took still greater liberty with the Apocrypha, to make them more easy and pleasant reading. Popular phrases he also used, as

> Geld und Gut, Land und Leute,
> Rath und That, Stecken und Stab.

Foreign words, which were then in-

truding into the German language, like a flood, he entirely discarded. He also coined words, to enrich the language. Erasmus Albert called him the German Cicero, who not only reformed religion, but also the German language.

Luther's version is an idiomatic reproduction of the Bible in the very spirit of the Bible. It brings out the whole wealth, force and beauty of the German language. It is the first German classic, as King James version is the first English classic. It anticipated the golden age of German literature, as represented by such authors as Lessing, Herder, Goethe and Schiller, all of whom are Protestants, and are more or less indebted to Luther's Bible for their style.

THE PROTESTANT SPIRIT OF LUTHER'S VERSION.

Dr. Emser, Secretary to Duke George of Saxony, and a man of some learning,

but a bitter opponent of the Reformation, charges Luther with many linguistic blunders and heretical falsifications. He published a new translation of the New Testament in order to correct Luther's errors. In this he proceeds from the basis of the Latin Vulgate, as if it were a perfectly correct version, which it is not. The errors which he names are mostly deviations from the Vulgate, while the points from which Luther deviates are errors, being themselves deviations from the originals. Emser's translation is largely a literal acknowledgement of Luther's ability and the correctness of his rendering.

That Luther's version has in it a shade and tone of Protestant doctrine, is a fact that admits of no question. The most important example of dogmatic influence in his version is the famous interpolation of the word, "alone," in Romans 3:28. By the insertion of this word, he meant to em-

phasize the Scriptural doctrine of justification by faith without works, over against the Roman doctrine of justification by faith and works. The anti-Roman and Protestant character of Luther's New Testament is further set forth in his prefaces to the different books. He draws a distinction between chief and less important books. He passes an unfavorable judgment on James, on the plea, that it has no evangelical character. He places the books in a new order according to their teaching on the subject of justification in the Protestant sense. He sees in the Roman Church the Babylonian harlot of the Apocalypse and in the Pope the Antichrist. In the illustrations by Cranach, which accompany Luther's New Testament, the harlot is represented as riding on a dragon, with the triple crown upon her head.

THE PAPISTS' REPLY TO LUTHER.

The Roman Catholics in their translations used the same liberty of marginal notes and pictorial illustrations in favor of their doctrines and the usages of their church. Emser, e. g., protests on the margin against Luther's "alone," that Paul by the words, "without the works of the law," does not mean that man is saved by faith alone without good works, but only without the works of the ceremonial law, as circumcision and other Jewish ceremonies. He confines the law to ritual law, and works to Jewish works; whereas, according to the best modern commentators, Paul means the whole law, moral as well as ceremonial, and all works commanded by the law. And yet, even in the same chapter, and throughout the whole epistle to the Romans, Emser copies verbatim Luther's version for whole verses and sections, and where he

departs from his language, it is generally for the worse. The other Catholic translators do the same thing. They follow Luther's language closely, and yet treat him with abuse in their notes.

SALE OF LUTHER'S NEW TESTAMENT.

Of Luther's first edition of the New Testament, September 22, 1522, five thousand copies were printed and sold before December of the same year, at the high price of one guilder and a half, equal to the purchasing value of four dollars of our own money. Hans Luft printed one hundred thousand copies on his press in Wittenberg. Adam Petri of Basel published seven editions between 1522 and 1525. Thomas Wolff of the same city, during the same time, published five editions. The precious little volume made its way with lightning speed into the palaces of the princes, the castles of the nobles, the

convents of the monks, the studies of the priests, the houses of the citizens, and the huts of the peasants. Mechanics, peasants, and women carried their New Testament with them to the field and the shop, and there, as well as at their homes, read and reread it, until they had fully mastered its contents, and dared to dispute with priests and doctors of theology about the gospel. This was the complaint of Cochlaeus, a Roman priest, and a wrathful adversary of the Reformers and the Reformation, whom Luther dubs "Rotzloeffel" — Snotty Spoony.

LUTHER ON THE EPISTLE OF ST. JAMES.

On this subject we will let two distinguished authors speak, the one a Presbyterian, the other a Lutheran.

Dr. Philip Schaff, Presbyterian, says: "The charge that Luther adapted

the translation to his theological opinion has become traditional in the Roman Catholic Church, and is repeated again and again by her controversialists and historians. The same objection has been raised against the authorized English version. In both cases the charge has some foundation, but no more than the countercharge which may be brought against the Roman Catholic version."

"The most important example of dogmatic influence on Luther's version is the famous interpolation of the 'alone', in Romans 3, 28, 'Allein durch den Glauben', by which he intended to emphasize his solifidian doctrine of justification on the plea, that the German idiom required the insertion for the sake of clearness. But he thereby brought Paul into direct verbal conflict with James, who says, 2:24, By works a man is justified and not by faith only.

It is well known that Luther deemed it impossible to harmonize the two apostles in this article, and characterized the epistle of James as an epistle of straw, because it had no evangelical character.

Dr. Henry Eyster Jacobs, Lutheran, takes up the case in his life of Luther, and says of it: "Luther's free language concerning the epistle of James, in the form in which it is generally quoted, omits the contrast which he makes with what he regards as the chief books of the New Testament. 'His words are, The Gospel of St. John and his first epistle, the epistles of St. Paul, especially those to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, and the first epistle of St. Peter, are the books that instruct us concerning Christ, and teach us all that is necessary and salutary for us to know, even though you should never see or hear another book. In comparison with these, therefore, the epistle of James is actually nothing but an

epistle of straw, for it has nothing whatever of Gospel.'

Luther's thought is this: If James be arrayed against Paul, and the doctrine of works be made the standard to which the doctrine of faith must be conformed, then, however, useful in its proper sphere, the epistle of James becomes one of straw. He interpreted the Old Testament by the New, the law by the gospel. A single word of the gospel was to him the end of all controversy."

Luther, it seems, was never fully convinced of the divine inspiration of the epistle of St. James. We will here insert what he says of the latter:

"The epistle of St. James I do not consider as the writing of an apostle at all for these reasons: First, that it ascribes justification to works in direct contradiction to Paul and the other sacred writers. Secondly, that it un-

dertakes to teach others, and yet, in all this long teaching, does not allude to the sufferings, resurrection and spirit of Christ. He mentions Christ several times, yet teaches nothing about him, but only speaks of faith in God generally. Now the foundation of a true Apostle is to preach Christ's sufferings, resurrection and office and to lay the foundation of faith in the same. But this James enjoins only the law and works, and so confuses the one with the other, that it appears to me as if some good, pious man had caught a few sayings from the disciples of the Apostles, and had committed these to paper. Or, it may have been written by another from his preaching. To sum up, he wishes to oppose those who rely on faith without works, and proving too weak for his task, he attempts to enforce by the law what the Apostles effect by the drawing of love. I cannot, therefore,

place this epistle among the really chief books, but will prevent no one from judging of it as he pleases, for many good texts are found in it."

Carl II. von Canstein.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CANSTEIN BIBLE INSTITUTE.

Carl Hildabrand von Canstein, 1667—1719, was the son of God-fearing parents, and descendant of one of the oldest and most distinguished families of the German nobility. He was himself a man of earnest and deep piety, of brilliant intellect, of highly finished education, and of unblemished moral character. He was, moreover, as highly favored in body as he was distinguished in mind, of noble figure and bearing and handsome countenance. After a brief and successful military career in the service of the electoral house of Brandenburg, he retired to private life, and chose the city of Berlin as his permanent residence. Here he met Spener, the far-famed preacher and founder of

the pietistic school, to whom he became sincerely attached, and with whom he lived in close communion and on terms of the warmest friendship, until his useful life was closed in death.

From this association Canstein drew rich nourishment for his spiritual life, and from thence received the impulse to devote his leisure hours to the study of theology. In this science he acquired eminent ability. Through Spener he also became acquainted with the theological faculty of Halle, especially with August Herman Francke, one of the professors, a learned man, an eloquent, evangelical, pulpit orator, and specially celebrated for his philanthropic enterprises.

Thus was formed a union between three men, whose names have become immortal in the Protestant church of Europe and America. The Church, at this time, stood in need of men of their endowments. A great and glorious

work was waiting to be done, and, as has frequently happened at such times, Providence raised up the laborers at the opportune moment, endowed them by nature, and qualified them by education and training with fitness for their task. It is no sacrilege to say, it was a union like that of Moses and Aaron, of Paul and Timothy, of Luther and Melanchthon.

Francke, since the year 1702, had been engaged, in a modest way, in printing the Scriptures, with the special object of selling them at a low price, in order to bring them within the reach of the poorer classes. This was a noble aim, and as such it at once met with the hearty approval of the benevolent Canstein. They formed a partnership in the beneficent enterprise. The first edition of the New Testament issued from their press made its appearance in 1712, and was sold at the low price of five cents per copy. Not satisfied with

the limited extent of their endeavors, Canstein determined on more extensive operations. He conceived the plan of founding a Bible Society as a permanent institution. To this end he applied to his wealthy and benevolently disposed friends and acquaintances for pecuniary contributions. His efforts in this direction were crowned with success. By the year 1716 he had gathered together the sum of 5735 dollars, of which, however, no less than 1000 dollars had been contributed by himself. With this amount as a fund was laid the foundation and was put in successful operation the world renowned Canstein Bible Institute. Organized in connection with the Orphans' Home of Halle, it still retains its seat at this place.

This institution, now near its second centennial, is an imperishable honor, not only to Canstein, its founder, but to the entire German-speaking evangelical

church. It is an institution, moreover, that has proven itself a blessing to millions. Successful from the beginning, it has continued growing and expanding until now it has attained to immense proportions. During the life-time of the good nobleman there were issued one hundred thousand New Testaments, and forty thousand entire Bibles. By the year 1873, the year of our latest statistics, the number of whole Bibles had run up to near six millions of copies, truly a marvelous result of an enterprise taking its start from so humble a beginning.

The Stade Bible was chosen as the text of the first Canstein issue. This was an improved edition of the Lutheran version, and a work of great merit. It had been prepared by Dr. Johann Dieckmann, 1647-1720, Superintendent of Bremen and Werden. Every subsequent issue was carefully revised and amended. In 1775 the orthography was

corrected so as to bring it in harmony with modern usage, and marginal notes were added in explanation of all attempts at improvement of the Lutheran version. The Canstein Bible is on all sides acknowledged to be the greatest success. It conforms most closely to the original texts and is worded in good modern German, and understood by all, the humble as well as the learned. Owing to its superiority, it has been adopted as the Textus Receptus, and is published and circulated, as the standard German Bible, by the various Bible societies, both of Europe and America.

CHAPTER IX.

REVISION OF THE LUTHERAN VERSION.

There have ever been among the Lutheran scholars those who have strenuously opposed every attempt at revision of Luther's Bible. Luther, himself, however, never considered his version as a final and perfect production. He continued at the labor of changing and improving it to the last year of his life. His first edition left the press in 1534. He issued a second and amended edition in 1535, a third in 1536. A fourth, thoroughly revised edition, appeared in 1540. His last and fifth edition he issued in 1545, one year before his decease, which was printed under his personal supervision. Had Luther's life been prolonged, there remains little

doubt, that he would have continued the process of change and improvement as long as life endured.

Other men, after the Reformer's departure from the present world, recognized the same necessity that had prompted him, and took up the work where he had left it. Thus, as early as the year 1547, one year after the great man's death, George Rorer, who had been his friend and associate during his life-time, brought out a new edition, with some alterations. Strict Lutherans, especially Melchior Goeze, denounced Rorer's changes as corruptions, made in the interest of Melanchthonianism, but Dr. Moenkenberg, himself an orthodox Lutheran, and no Melanchthonian, has proven the charges groundless. The changes made were called for and proper.

Others indulged in the same practice, thereby causing great dissatisfaction in certain quarters. To put a stop to all

such efforts, and to produce an edition that should be universally accepted as the standard Lutheran Bible, the Elector George of Saxony authorized Coelestinus to undertake a textual revision, which resulted in an edition which appeared in 1581, and which conformed closely to Luther's edition of 1545, but no one, outside of Saxony, paid any attention to it, and the practice complained of went on as before. Editions, varying more or less from one another, grew in number until there were counted a dozen of them. Of these the most meritorious was that of Johann Dieckmann, which appeared in 1690, and is known as the Stade-Bibel. To this succeeded, and was in close harmony with it, the Bible published by the Canstein Bible Institute. The latter has successfully reached and maintained the preeminence over all others, up to the present time.

Meanwhile the critical study of the

Scriptures went on. Learned men claimed to have discovered that Luther had not always given the correct rendering of the original text, and that for this and other reasons a thorough revision of his Bible was urgently required. A. H. Francke, who, among others, was of this opinion, attempted to answer this demand, and entered upon the task of a complete revision. But he had not advanced far in his undertaking, when there arose a storm of opposition, on the part of the stricter Lutherans, that raged so furiously around his head, that he was only too glad to abandon his design. And yet even so orthodox a Lutheran as Claus Harms was in favor of revision, claiming that a revision should be made, once, at least, in every hundred years. Others, at a somewhat later period, undertook to do what Francke had begun, but which he found himself constrained to leave unfinished. The Patrician, John

Frederick Meyer, 1772-1849, a citizen of Frankfurt-on-the-Main, and a man of mystical theosophic tendencies, published a revised Bible, the first edition of which appeared in 1819, and the last in 1855. Rudolph Stier, of blessed memory, 1800-1862, Superintendent of Eisleben, made a like attempt, his first edition appearing in Bielefeld in 1860, and his third in 1867. Both authors have inserted too many modern terms, and have retained too many archaic. Their revisions were not destitute of merit, but were, nevertheless, received with scant favor.

In spite of all the opposition, and of all the discouragements encountered, the demand for revision did not cease to make itself heard. On the contrary, it grew louder and more urgent as time passed. Then, when the discussion was at its full height, about the middle of the last century, fortunately for the advocates of a change, events occurred

which greatly changed the aspect of affairs. There were then discovered two manuscripts which shed new light on the subject. These were the Codex Vaticanus, and the Codex Sinaiticus, the two oldest, and the two most authoritative manuscripts extant. Both of them date back to the fourth century, and it is even possible that the parts of the New Testament which they contain may have been copied from the originals of the inspired writers. There are in existence at this time some seventeen hundred Greek manuscripts of the Scriptures, by collating and comparing which the long recognized Textus Receptus was formed. But these are all of a later date than these two, and not one of them is complete.

The Codex Vaticanus was brought from Asia Minor to Rome about the year 1448, and was deposited in the Vatican library, where it lay unknown and neglected until the nineteenth cen-

tury. Not until the year 1868 did it become fully known. In that year steps were taken to publish for general use a thoroughly prepared copy of it. It does not contain the entire Bible. Each testament wants a few books.

The Codex Sinaiticus was discovered by Professor Tischendorf of Leipsic University in the library of the St. Katherine Monastery upon Mt. Sinai in Arabia, where it had reposed unknown for many hundred years. Tischendorf made three visits to this monastery in search of the priceless document, the first in 1844, the second in 1853, and the third in 1859. On his first visit he discovered a part of the manuscript. His second visit proved fruitless. But on his third visit he found all that was wanting. With the exception of a few books of the Old Testament, the manuscript proved the Bible complete. After some negotiation with the monks, he obtained permission to carry it with

him on his return journey to Germany. Here the announcement of its find at once created a soulstirring interest. All Europe resounded with exclamations of joy over the recovery of so inestimable a treasure. The Emperor of Russia, Alexander II, had prepared and printed, at his own expense, a fac-simile edition of it, consisting of 300 copies, and gotten up in magnificent style in four folio volumes, which he distributed gratuitously here and there, especially in university libraries. Some twelve copies of this edition have found their way to our own country, one of which is in the Seminary library at Gettysburg, Pa.

The information obtained from these two manuscripts made it necessary to reconstruct the Textus Receptus, and furnished an additional reason for the revision of the Lutheran Bible. The objection to revision, though not altogether subdued, grew less violent and per-

sistent. An official revision was therefore ordered at last, and was inaugurated in 1868 by the Eisenach Evangelical Church Conference. Its version received the name of Probebibel. It was prepared with extraordinary care by a commission, consisting of the ablest biblical scholars of Germany. The work was severely criticized by opposite schools. For some the changes which had been made were too many, while for others they were too few.

In 1886 it was committed for final action to the Eisenach Conference, and received its approval. The revision is extremely conservative, and, in comparison with the latest revision of the English version, made but few changes. While it was generally approved, it did not meet with the same enthusiasm and favor accorded to the English version of 1885, owing, no doubt, to the more sober and conservative character of the German nation, and their extreme love

and veneration for the unaltered Bible of Luther.

We deem it in order here to state, that the first Bible ever published in our own country, was the German Bible of Luther, which made its appearance in 1774, in quarto form, from the press of Christopher Saur of Germantown, Pa., copies of which may be found all over the States, in the dwellings of the descendants of the early German immigrants.

CHAPTER X.

LUTHER'S DEFENSE OF HIS TRANSLATION.

Under date of September 12, 1530, Luther addressed a letter to his friend, Wenceslaus Link of Nuremberg, in answer to an inquiry which the latter had previously directed to him. The importance and interest which attach to this letter arise mainly from the fact, that therein Luther details the manner in which he proceeded in his work of translating the sacred Scriptures, more especially those of the New Testament; also from the further fact, that in it he states his reasons for the insertion of the word, "alone," into Romans 3:28, for which act he had been denounced as a falsifier of God's Word, on the part of Roman Catholic writers, among

whom were specially prominent Cochlaeus, Emser and Eck.

The translation does not give the letter in full. A few passages, and some words, which we thought could be omitted without weakening the force of the argument, or interrupting the thread of the narrative have been dropped. Those who are interested to know this letter in its completeness, and in its original style of composition, will find it in the Erlangen edition of Luther's German works, Volume 65, page 102-123.

THE LETTER.

REVEREND AND DEAR FRIEND:

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus. Your writing, together with the question concerning which you desire a statement of my opinion, has been received. You want to know why, in Rom. 3:28, Arbitramus hominem justificari ex fide absque operibus, I have trans-

lated: "Wir halten dass der Mensch gerecht werde ohne des Gesetzes werke, allein durch den Glauben." We conclude that a man is justified by faith "alone", without the deeds of the law. And in addition you state, how the Papists busy themselves, out of all measure of reason and decency, because the word sola, "alone", is not found in Paul's text, and that such an addition to God's Word is not to be permitted.

You may answer the Papists from me, that had I, Dr. Luther, known that the Papist crowd were so skilled, that they were able to translate correctly a chapter of the Scriptures, I would have humbly condescended to request their aid and co-operation in the translation of the New Testament. But since I knew, that not one of them understands how to translate, or how to speak German correctly, I have saved them and me that trouble. This also appears clear, that they learn to speak and write

German from my translations and from my German. They steal my language, of which hitherto they have known so little, and for this they give me no thanks, but on the contrary use it in writing against me. I am well pleased to see that they appreciate my language. It is to me a real pleasure to know, that I have taught these ungrateful pupils of mine, who are my enemies, how to speak.

You may further say, that in translating the New Testament I have acted conscientiously and to the best of my ability. I compel no one to read it. That I leave to everyone's will and choice. I have done my work to serve those who are not able to produce anything better. No one is forbidden to surpass me, and produce a superior translation. Whoever will not read my testament is permitted to leave it alone. No constraint is offered anyone. It is my translation and my testament, and

that and no more it shall ever remain. Even if I had failed in my work—of which I am not conscious, for I would not knowingly mistranslate a single letter—I would not allow the Papists to be my judges.

I know well what skill, what mind, what diligence, and what wisdom are required, to be a good translator. My opponents have never made trial of it. The saying is: The man who builds his house by the roadside will have many to tender him their advice. So it happens to me. There are those who, though they have never been able to speak correctly, to say nothing of translating, want to be my instructors, and I shall be their disciple. If I had asked them how the first two words of St. Matthew's Gospel, Liber Generationis, were to be rendered into German, not one of them would have known what to answer me. This was also the lot of Jerome, when he made his translation of the Bible.

The whole world then set up as his critics and teachers. They knew all, he alone it was who knew nothing, while the truth was that not one of these wiseacres was worthy to undo the good man's shoelatchets. Therefore great forbearance is requisite to him who attempts to accomplish some public good. The world will always want to be master of wisdom, and lead the horse by the tail. She knows all, but is able to accomplish nothing. That has ever been, and ever will be her way.

I would like to see the Papist who would undertake to translate an epistle of St. Paul, or a book of the Prophets, without making use of Luther's German and of Luther's translation. A pretty German and German rendering we would see. We have seen how the Dresden scribbler (Emser) has mastered my New Testament, and acknowledges it to be sweet and good, and was aware that he could not improve on it, omitted my

introduction, my gloss, and my name, substituted for them his own introduction, his own gloss, and his own name, and now is selling my New Testament as his under his own name. Dear me, how it grieved me that his master (Duke George of Saxony) condemned Luther's Testament, and indicted the reading of it and at the same time enjoined the reading of the scribbler's testament, which in truth is the same that was made by Luther. And lest anyone might think I did not speak truth, let him take in hand and compare both testaments, mine and the scribbler's and he will discover who is the translator. What in a few places, he has patched and changed, though I don't like it, I will let pass.

It does me no harm, as far as the text is concerned, and for that reason I have not cared to say anything against it. But I have been greatly amused at the shrewd proceeding to abuse, condemn

and prohibit my New Testament, because sent forth under my name, and to recommend its reading when it comes out under the name of another. But let the world judge what kind of behavior it is, to abuse and defame a man's book and then go and steal it and send it forth under one's own name, and by this means seek to gain profit and win popularity. Meanwhile it is enough for me, and I am happy to know, that my labor is made useful through the agency of my enemies, and that my book is read, though in the name of another. Looking at these effects, how can I seek revenge, or even take offense.

To come back to my subject. Whenever a Papist goes to make much ado over the word, "sola," *"alone,"* answer him: Dr. Martin Luther will have it so. We will not be pupils nor disciples of Papists, but their teachers and judges.

While thus you may answer these ad-

versaries of mine, to you and to our people I will give the reason, why I have used the word "sola", "alone", in Romans 3:28. It has been my endeavor in my translation to give the sense in pure and plain German. And it has happened to us oftentimes, that we have sought for one word, two, three and four weeks, and even then have failed to find it. In our labor on Job, myself, Melanchthon, and Aurogallus, have sometimes in four days scarcely finished three lines. Since now the translation is made, one can in as many minutes let his eye run over three and four pages without any difficulty. Walking along as over a smooth path, one does not perceive what stumps and boulders have had to be moved out of the way, and how we have sweated and been perplexed over our task. It is easy ploughing, when the field is clean, but to cut down trees, pull up stumps, and remove rocks, and thus prepare the ground, is a labor,

which is neither easy nor pleasant to perform, and therefore no one cares to undertake it. Ours is an ungrateful world. God himself receives but little thanks, though he has given us the sun, yea heaven and earth, and sacrificed his own dear Son for us.

I have known that in Romans 3:28 the Latin and Greek texts have not the word solum or sola. The Papists have no need to tell me that. This they see, but they don't see that it is implied in the text, and must be given in the translation, if the latter shall express the sense with due clearness and force. My object has been to speak German, not Latin and Greek. It is characteristic of the German language, when two things are spoken of, the one of which is denied and the other affirmed, that it uses the word, "solum", "alone", along with the word, not, or none. Let me illustrate. Where the Latins and Greeks would say: The farmer brings corn

and no money, the Germans say: The farmer brings corn only and no money.

Greek: I have now no money, but corn.

German: I have now no money, but corn only.

Greek: I have eaten, but not drunken.

German: I have eaten only, but not drunken.

In these expressions, although the Latin and the Greek do not do it, but the German does, and is her manner, to add the word, "alone," in order to make the word, not, or none, fuller and clearer. Although I might say: The farmer brings corn and no money, which would be correct German, yet the words, no money, express the idea not so fully and so clearly as when I say: The farmer brings corn only, and no money. The word only, helps the word no, so much that the whole becomes a full and clear expression. It is not for us to

ask the letter of the Latin language how to speak German, as these Papists do. But it behooves us rather to consult the mother in the home, the children on the street, the common man on the market place, and to look at their mouths how they talk, and shape our translations by that. It is then that they will understand us, and perceive that we are speaking German to them.

But why say more in answer to my detractors? Would I assign a reason for the choice of all my words and ideas, years would be required to do so. What an art, what labor, and what weariness, there is in making translations, I have fully experienced; whereas my opponents have never attempted or experienced anything of the kind. I will not therfore allow them to act as my critics and censors. Whoever is not pleased with my work can leave it alone. No thanks to him who takes it up with a mind preoccupied by prejudice, and at-

tempts to offer corrections of which I do not approve. If any correcting is to be done, I want to do it myself. Where I don't do it myself, let him leave my work in peace. He can attempt whatever seems good to him, apart from my labor, and do his work in his own way, and may he have a happy time of it.

I can say with a good conscience, that in my work of translating, I have observed the utmost faithfulness and exercised the severest diligence, and never have given way to an improper thought. I have not gained by it a single copper, and reaped from it no profit whatever. I have not thought of my own honor, as God my Lord knows. The labor I have performed has had for its object, to serve the dear Christian people, and to promote the honor of Him who lives above, and who has every hour of my life bestowed on me so much good, that had I done a thousand times more, and

wrought with a thousand times greater diligence, I would on that account not have been worthy of life, nor of the enjoyment of a healthy and sound eyesight. All I have and all I am, I owe to his mercy and grace; yea, it is owing to his precious blood and bitter sweat. Therefore, if it please God, all shall be devoted, with a joyful heart, to his honor. Do the papal writers see fit to treat me with abuse, very well, so be it. Pious Christians will honor me and their Lord Jesus Christ. I shall consider myself richly recompensed, if but one solitary Christian soul recognizes me as a faithful laborer. It would grieve my heart indeed, if my foes would praise me. Their abuse of me I count my greatest praise and my highest honor. In spite of them I am a teacher of theology, and this name and office they shall not wrest from me on this side of the day of judgment. That I know right well.

I may further say, I have not translated with undue freedom. In company with my assistants I have aimed with great care to retain the letter wherever it was possible. I have preferred rather to make the German give way, than to depart from the literal sense. Oh, not every one has the gift of translating, as the foolish papal saints imagine. It requires a truly pious, faithful, God-fearing, learned, experienced and practically Christian heart. Wherfore I contend that no false Christian, nor trifling person, is fit to translate.

So much about translating and the characteristics and idiom of the German language. And now, permit me to add, that I have not exclusively leaned on, and proceeded according to, the idiomatic characteristics of the German language, in adding *"solum"* (allein) to Romans 3:28. The text and meaning of the Apostle Paul absolutely demand this addition. For there he treats of the

chief article of the Christian faith, viz., that we are justified by faith in Jesus Christ, without the works of the law. Work can supply no aid to justification. As an example he cites the case of Abraham, and says, that he was justified without the deeds of the law, and that even the highest work, which at that time was newly commanded, and placed above all other works and laws, viz., circumcision, could be of no service to justification, but that without circumcision and without all works, he was justified through faith, as he says in Romans 4:2, "If Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to glory, but not before God." But where all works are excluded there the meaning must be that faith alone justifies. And hence he who will speak plainly and correctly of such exclusion of works, is obliged to say, that faith alone, and not works, justifies. The nature of the case demands

this, apart from the requirements of the idiom of the German language.

But now the cry is raised, "by so speaking offense is given, and people are taught that they need do no good works." Dear me, what shall we say to this? Does Paul not give great offense, when instead of saying, "By faith alone," he pours it out much heavier, and knocks the bottom clear out of the barrel, by saying: "Without the works of the law." And in Galatians 2:16, "Not justified by the works of the law." And the like more in other parts of the Scriptures. The word, "alone", might be given a place among the gloss, but the phrase, "without the works of the law", is so coarse, so offensive, and so shameful, that a gloss can be of no service to it. How much more will the people be persuaded, that they need do no good works, when they hear it preached by an Apostle, "No works—without works —not through works." But if by this

manner no offense is given, why should there be offense given by saying, "By faith alone."

But how much more offensive still is it that Paul does not merely reject ordinary and common works, but the works of the law, the moral law of God. So greatly might one be offended at this as to say, that the law is there condemned and pronounced accursed, and that he is allowed to sin, as said those spoken of in Romans 3:8, "Let us do evil that good may come", as also some of the rabble are saying in our own time. What shall we say then? Shall we reject St. Paul's teaching on account of its effects, or speak freely and boldly of Faith? We, in common with St. Paul, desire to see this offense taking, and preach so forcibly against works and in favor of faith alone, for no other reason than this, that the people may take offense, stumble and fall, that they may learn and realize, that through

good works they are not made righteous, but through Christ's death and resurrection only. If then we are not justified by good works, much less are we justified by evil works, and without the law. Therefore, it is not to be argued: Inasmuch as good works do not avail, evil works must do it, no more than that, because the sun cannot avail a blind man, therefore night and darkness can do it.

It does amaze me that there has arisen so much adverse sentiment over a matter, which is so plainly and fully taught in the holy Scriptures. Tell me, are Christ's death and resurrection our work? No, not ours, nor the work of the law. Christ's death and resurrection alone deliver us from sin and render us righteous, as Paul teaches in Romans 4:25, "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." Tell me further, what is the work by which we apprehend and

retain Christ's death and resurrection? It can be by no external act, but by faith alone within the heart. This alone, exclusively and alone, without all works, apprehends this death and resurrection, where it is preached through the gospel.

Why then this raving and ranting, this charging with heresy, and this burning of heretics, when the fact is manifest and clear, that faith alone apprehends Christ and the resurrection, without all works, and that this death and resurrection are our life and our righteousness? If it then is so self-evident, that faith alone brings and grants us life and righteousness, why not also preach and publish the fact? It is not held to be heresy to believe, that faith alone apprehends Christ and gives life, but it is heresy to say and teach so. Are the Papists not madmen and senseless idiots? The matter itself they acknowledge to be right, but openly to

proclaim it they denounce as wrong. Both are either alike right, or alike wrong. and must stand or fall together.

Nor am I the first and only man, who asserts that faith alone justifies. Ambrose, Augustine and others, have held and taught as I do. And whoever reads and understands St. Paul, will be constrained to confess, that his language is too plain and too strong, to admit of any works whatever. But if no work, then faith alone. Oh, it would be so pleasing, so gratifying, and acceptable a doctrine to the people, that not by faith alone, but by their own works, they could render themselves righteous. Much it would be to them to know, that not Christ's death alone delivers from sin, but that our own works also are instrumental in freeing us from its bonds. What an honor it would be to Christ, think you, to let him know how much of help we can be to him; that we can do the same that he can do, and that we

are equally as good and as mighty as he is.

In conclusion, since now it is evident that the nature of the subject itself demands to say, that faith alone justifies and saves; since the characteristics of our German tongue also require us so to speak; since we have the example of our holy church fathers to the same effect; and since the peril impends over our people, that they will continue trusting to works, and fail to come to faith, especially at this time, when for ages they have heard taught nothing but a false work-righteousness, and are only with difficulty convicted of its errors; it is not only right and proper, but extremely needful, that we announce to them, with all the vigor at our command, and in the plainest and fullest terms, that faith alone, without the deeds of the law, justifies and saves.

I regret that I have not also added,

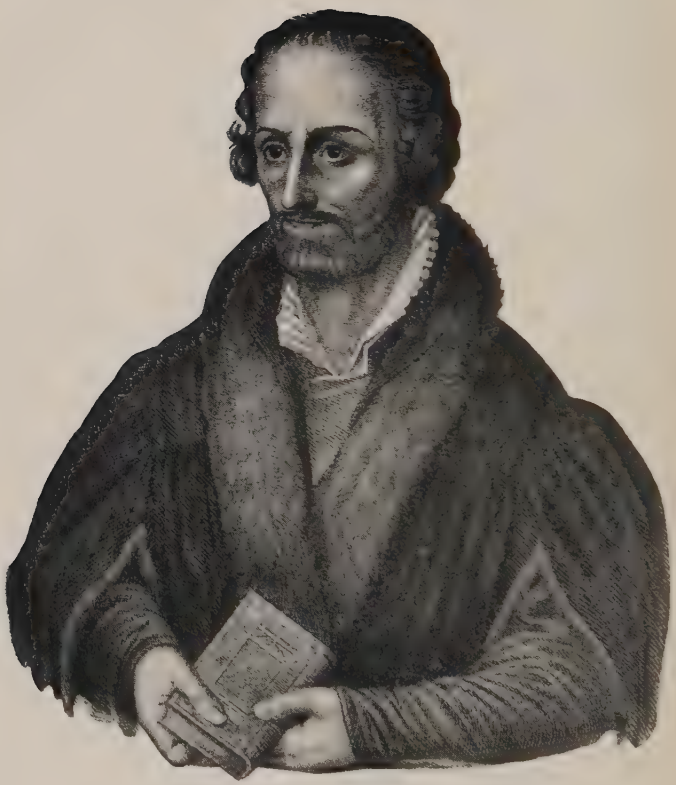
every and all, so as to read, "Without every and all works of the law." Therefore the word "alone", shall remain in my New Testament, and though all the Papists should turn raving madmen, they shall not banish it from it. Let this suffice as an answer to your question. Later if the Lord permit, I will revert to the same subject again, in my little treatise on justification.

Christ Jesus our Lord be with us all. Amen.

MARTIN LUTHER,
Your loving and faithful friend.

There is no doubt that Luther had other reasons for his insertion of the word, "alone," besides those given by him in this letter. He aimed, doubtlessly to place his emphatic veto on the Roman doctrine of justification not by faith alone, but by works and faith. And the Lutheran Church has endorsed

his action. She retains in her doctrinal statements the word "alone", whenever she speaks of justification from sin. By faith alone man is justified, is her most frequently repeated dogma, and her never ceasing theme of public and private instruction.



PHILIP MELANCHTHON.

CHAPTER XI.

TESTIMONIALS TO THE MERITS OF LUTHER'S VERSION.

"Luther's Version of the Bible is a wonderful monument of genius, learning and piety, and may be regarded, in a secondary sense, as inspired." This is the judgment and conviction of one of the ablest theologians and fairest critics of our age and nation, himself not a Lutheran. This also is the almost universal verdict of intelligent Protestant believers and learned authors, from the time of Luther to our own. That Romanists should hold and maintain views the reverse of this, is no more than what we should look for from that source. But that outside of Rome in professedly Protestant circles, we should meet with like deprecating sen-

timents, is matter of wonder and amazement. Yet such we find to be the case. And although such unfriendly and unfair reflections must be attributed either to ignorance, or else to prejudice, or to both; yet since they do appear, we deem it proper to adduce in this place a few of the many expressions in commendation of this version, from men of highest authority and most unquestioned veracity.

REV. CHARLES PORTERFIELD KRAUTH, D.D.: LL.D.

This learned theologian, now deceased, was a member of the American Company of the Old Testament revisers in the late revision of King James' English Version; was one of the most learned writers on both the English and the German Bible, on Martin Luther, and on the movements of the 16th century, which America has produced. This man's verdict is: "The Bible of

Luther is an acknowledged masterpiece, one of the wonders of the intellectual world. How Luther raised what seemed to be a barbarous jargon into a language which, in flexible beauty and power of internal combination, has no parallel but in Greek, and in massive vigor no superior, but the English, writers of every school, Protestant and Romish alike, have loved to tell. The language of Germany has grown since Luther, but it has had no new creation. He who takes up Luther's Bible, grasps a whole world in his hand, a world which will perish only when this green earth itself shall pass away. Luther's facility in the choice of words, the exquisite naturalness and clearness in the construction of his sentences, the dignity, force, and vivacity of his expressions, his affluence of phrase, his power of compression, and the rhythmic melody of his flow of style, have excited an admira-

tion, to which witness has been borne from the beginning by friend and foe."

REV. HENRY EYSTER JACOBS, D. D.; LL. D.

This master of theological science is at this time perhaps the most learned divine in the Lutheran Church in America, a prolific writer on various religious subjects, and the author of the best life of Luther in the English language. He has this to say on Luther's translation: "With little apparatus, not even consulting previous translations until the first draft was finished, he worked with such rapidity that, within three months, the entire New Testament was in idiomatic German that to the present hour is the wonder of all literary critics. His entire life and character are reflected in the style. All his attainments are kept subordinate to the one object of presenting the thoughts of Revelation in language that is simplest and most intelligible to all classes of people. In

giving the Germans their Bible, he gave the German language a permanent literary form, and upon the basis of a common language, replacing the confusion of dialects that had heretofore been current, unified the German people. His translation is not only a rendering of the original into another tongue, it is an interpretation that touches at once the heart and very life of the most unlettered as well as the most learned."

REV. ADOLPH SPAETH, D. D.; LL. D.

This divine and teacher of theology is master equally of the German and English languages, and a thoroughly competent authority on the literary and moral influence of both the German and the English versions of the Bible. He says: "The two great Protestant tongues, the German and the English, have given the world the two most perfect versions of the Bible, both national

works, which have entered into the very life, the thought, the language, and the literature of their people."

Of Luther and his translation, Dr. Spaeth further says: "There can be no dispute as to Luther's peculiar fitness and call for the work of translating the Word of God into his native tongue. It is true, he was not the foremost linguistic scholar of his age. There were men like Erasmus, Melanchthon and Reuchlin, who surpassed him in their knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. But Luther was sufficiently equipped in the knowledge of those ancient tongues, to see for himself and to form an independent judgment. What he may have lacked in philology, was compensated by his eminent exegetical feeling or instinct, and by the fact that he had lived himself completely into the spirit of the Bible. His devout and pious soul was in true affinity with the Spirit that gave the living Word of God. And these

gifts and graces as a translator found their channel in his matchless German. In this he stood supreme. The most German of Germans, towering above the great, yet absolutely one of the people, he possessed such a mastery, such an ability to make it plastic for every end of language as belonged to no other man of his time, to no other man since. His German style is the model of the scholar, the idol of the people.

Luther's marvelous success as a translator is all the more remarkable, if we remember that at the time when he undertook this work there was really no recognized standard of the German language. In his days, the language, as he complained, was broken up into various dialects without one having preponderance over the other. He had to choose an idiom that would be understood by both North and South German. This he found to some extent in the diplomatic language used at the Saxon Court. Up

to the beginning of the fourteenth century, all the official documents had to be written in Latin. Since 1330 German began to take its place, chiefly through the influence of Ludwig of Bavaria. In Austria Maximillian introduced the German as the official diplomatic language. In Saxony this was done by the Elector Ernest, Father of Frederick the Wise. But for the purpose of Luther's translation, the choice of the Saxon court language did not, after all, entirely solve the difficult problem. The religious and devotional language of the German Mystics, and the popular idiom of the common people, among whom he was living, had to be consulted, studied and assimilated, in order to produce that pithy, forcible, dignified, and classic German, of which Martin Luther is properly and justly called the author. Luther had the singular pleasure and satisfaction of seeing his work on the New Testament trans-

lation unscrupulously appropriated by his enemies. "Emser," he said, "took my New Testament almost word for word as it came from my hand, removed my preface, notes and name from it, added his name, his preface, and his notes to it, and sold my Testament under his name."

JEAN HENRI MERLE D'AUBIGNE, D. D.

This man is a distinguished historian and holds to the Calvinistic faith. In his history of the Reformation, he declares of Luther's Bible: "The new translation, written in the very tone of the holy writings, in a language yet in its youthful vigor, and which for the first time displayed its great beauties, interested, charmed, and moved the lowest as well as the highest ranks. It was a national work, the book of the people, nay more, it was in very truth the book of God. Even opponents could not refuse their approbation to this wonder-

ful work, and some indiscreet friends of the Reformer, impressed by the beauty of the translation, imagined that they could recognize in it a second inspiration. This version served more than all Luther's writings to the spread of a Christian piety. The work of the 16th century was thus placed on a foundation, where nothing could shake it. The Bible given to the people, recalled the mind of man, which had been wandering for ages in the tortuous labyrinth of scholasticism, to the divine fountain of salvation. Accordingly the success of this work was prodigious. In a short time every copy was sold. A second edition appeared in the month of December, and in 1533 seventeen editions had been printed in Wittenberg, thirteen in Augsburg, twelve at Basel, one at Erfurt, one at Grimma, one at Leipsic, and thirteen at Strasburg. Such were the powerful levers that up-

lifted and transformed the church and the world."

DOCTOR DOLLINGER.

This man is on all sides recognized as one of the greatest, if not the greatest historian who has ever arisen within the Roman church, and though driven out of his communion by excommunication on account of his opposition to the decree of papal infallibility, he remained in substance a Roman Catholic to the end of his life. Whatever his changes may have been on some points of Roman doctrine, over against Protestantism, he never was anything but an uncompromising opponent. This man speaks of Luther as follows: "He has given his people more than any other man, in Christian ages, has given to a people, namely, language, manual of public instruction, Bible, and hymns of worship. Even those Germans, who abhorred him as the powerful heretic and

seducer of the nation, cannot escape his influence. They must discourse with his words, and think with his thoughts. To have shaped one of the chief literary tongues of mankind would be glory enough for a less able man, but it is only one of the lesser jewels in Luther's crown.

The education which he had fostered slowly, but unmistakably, did its work in liberalizing the minds of his people. The result was, that while Germany, for a long time after Luther was still hopelessly divided politically, and at times crushed under the iron heel of despotism, she became the intellectual leader of Europe. We think that we can, without exaggeration, refer this result to Luther's influence more than to any other factor. The Germans have idolized his memory, they have spoken his language, they have borrowed from his writings, in each generation, the most

liberal ideas which they were able to grasp."

D. C. MONROE.

This gentleman is professor of history in the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and a scholar of distinguished ability. He says of Luther's Bible, "His German Bible penetrated to every village, almost to every household. It was expressed in homely language, and became a possession of the people. It is wholly impossible to estimate its influence. It was in the vernacular, so that it was possible for all to understand it. By the agency of the printing press it was made extremely cheap. In many households, it was the one book which the family possessed. To most of its readers and hearers it had been practically unknown. In addition to supplying their religious needs, it opened to them all its wealth of story, poetry, and imagery. A na-

tion was being educated from the Bible."

"If Luther had contributed nothing else, his service to literature would have been great, because by his Bible and other writings he furnished a literary standard and the language, which has become the literary tongue of the German people. Scholars in his day wrote many different forms of German; today all scholars use Luther's German."

PROFESSOR HEDGE.

This man is by religious faith a Unitarian, and by this very far removed from Luther, who firmly believed in a Divine Trinity. For some years the gentleman has been instructor of German in Harvard University. He says: "The modern German attained its full development and perfect finish in Luther's version. By means of that book it obtained a currency which nothing else could have given it. It became

fixed; it became universal; it became the organ of literature, which more than any other since the Greek has been a literature of ideas. It became the vehicle of modern philosophy, the cradle of those thoughts which at the moment act most intensely on the German mind."

F. O. IMES.

A scholar and writer of distinction, says: "The absolute simplicity of Luther's Bible brings it to the level of a child's understanding. Its strength and grace give it an enduring place as a work of art. Germany instantly felt its charms, and for three centuries it has been to innumerable millions the supreme consoler and sanctifier, the power associated with their tenderest, most pathetic memories, the old link which has connected sordid lives with noble and sublime ideas. And for the first time it gave the nation a literary lan-

guage. Up to this stage every author had written in the dialect with which he, himself, was familiar. Henceforth for the men of Swabia, of Bavaria, of Saxony, and all other districts, there was a common speech, which the writers of each state could use without any sense of inferiority to those of another. It is thus to Luther that the Germans owe the most essential of all the conditions of a truly national life and literature."

T. M. LINDSAY.

A Scotchman, distinguished as a historical writer, and the author of a brilliant biography of Luther, says of Luther's Bible: "Luther's aim was to reproduce the tone and spirit of the original, as far as he possibly could. No fine, courtly words, he said to Spalatin, this book can only be explained in a simple, popular style. It must be understood by the house, by the children in

the street, and by the common man in the market. By choosing the Franconian dialect in use in the imperial chancery, Luther made himself intelligible to those whose vernacular dialect was high German or low German, and his Bible is still the standard of the German tongue and has preserved unity of language, literature and thought of the German nation during its political disintegration."

JACOB GRIMM.

This writer is one of the profoundest thinkers, and most learned philologists of Germany. He says:

"Luther's language must be considered, both on account of its noble and almost miraculous purity, and its great impressiveness, as the germ and foundation of modern high-German diction, but slightly departed from even in our day, and then, in most cases, to the loss

of its expressive power. The modern high-German may, in fact, be termed the dialect of Protestantism, and the spirit of freedom which it breathes has long since, unknown to themselves, captivated the writers and poets of the Roman Church. We are indebted to Luther more than to anyone for reviving and fostering the body and spirit of our language, and even for the beauties of modern German poetry."

HEINRICH HEINE.

Poet and philosopher, says, "Through Luther we have attained to the greatest religious freedom. But this Martin Luther gave us not only liberty to move, but also the means of moving. For the spirit he gave us the body. He created the word for the thought. He created the German language. He did this by his translation of the Bible."

WILIBALD GRIMM.

Doctor of Divinity, Professor of theology, and Consistorial Counsellor of Grand Ducal Saxony, speaks of Luther in this wise: "All barriers, erected by the Roman Hierarchy, were swept away by the storm floods of the Reformation. From thenceforth no power on earth, political or ecclesiastical, was able to repress the demand for the Bible in the language of the people. In Germany there was no man better qualified for the work of translation of the Scriptures into the vernacular than was Dr. Martin Luther—Luther, whom, without hesitation, we may pronounce the greatest German, an incarnation of the national German spirit in its fullest and deepest feeling—Luther, the unconquerable faith-hero who, amid the severest struggles of heart and conscience, had sought and found peace of soul in the Holy Scriptures—Luther who was penetrated to his inmost depth of soul with

their religious spirit, and who, in spite of the want of good grammars and lexicons, had attained to a very respectable knowledge of the three ancient languages, which came into requisition in the work of reproducing in the German language the Scriptures in their original sense and spirit; wherefore his translation may be said to be inspired, provided we understand the term inspiration in the only sense sanctioned by right and reason."

Numberless testimonials to the same effect might be produced from the best authoritative sources; but let the above suffice.

CHAPTER XII.

THE ENGLISH VERSION.

In setting out to write the history of the Lutheran Version of the Scriptures, it was not our purpose to treat of the English version, but on further reflection, in view of the fact that there is an intimate connection between the German and the English versions, and remembering further that the readers of this book are also readers of the English Bible, we concluded to devote a chapter also to the history of the latter.

THE PRIMITIVE ENGLISH VERSIONS.

As far back as we can trace the English language, we can find evidences of the existence of translations of parts of the Scriptures. Caedmon, who died A. D. 680, made metrical versions from

several parts of the Old and of the New Testament, based upon translations then existing. Eadfrith, who died A. D. 721, translated most of the books of the Bible into the vernacular. In the tenth century there were in circulation a translation of the first seven books of the Bible, made by Aelfric, and translations of the books of Kings, Esther, Job, Judith, the Maccabees, and of the four Gospels, which were probably by the same pen.

That a number of such translations were made, and that they had a comparatively wide circulation, is inferred from the statement of Archbishop Cranmer in his preface to the authorized version of 1540. He says that "the Holy Bible was translated and read in the Saxon's tongue which was at that time our mother's tongue," many hundred years before the date at which he was writing, "whereof there remaineth yet divers copies, found in old abbeys,

of such antique manner of writing and speaking that few men have been able to read and understand them. And when this language waxed old and out of common usage, because folk should not lack fruit of reading, it was again translated into the newer language, whereof yet also many copies remain and be daily found." Sir Thomas Moore wrote that long before Wycliffe's days, "the whole Bible was by virtuous and well learned men, translated into the English tongue, and by good and godly people with devotion and soberness, well and reverently read." Foxe, the Martyrologist, says: "If histories be well examined, we shall find both before the Conquest and after, as well before John Wycliffe was born, as since, the whole body of the Scriptures by sundry men translated into our country tongue." These translations were made from the Vulgate, and were very defective. They were exceedingly free ren-

derings, but with all their imperfections they accomplished much good. They enabled the plain people of the time to acquire some knowledge, at least, of the saving word of God and of the way to heaven.

Of the many versions made, only a few fragments have come down to our time. They perished in the vast and ruthless destruction of libraries that took place a few years after Cranmer wrote. The libraries of London, of the University of Oxford, and many others entirely disappeared, and with them many invaluable literary treasures.

THE MODERN VERSIONS.

John Wycliffe, 1324-1384, the well-known reformer brought out a complete copy of the Bible in the English tongue, in 1382. This was a great event for the English people. It gave them what few other nations had, the Bible in their own

JOHN WYCLIFFE.

native tongue. Wycliffe understanding neither Hebrew nor Greek, made his translation from the Latin Vulgate. This version had by this time become corrupted and Wycliffe's work partakes of all its faults. But it proved itself a great blessing nevertheless. It started thought, inquiry, and promoted intelligence, morality and religion.

The higher clergy, however, opposed its circulation. They forbade its use. Its readers were persecuted and severely punished. Still the people read it. During the war of the Roses it fell into disuse, and thereafter its interests never again revived. Some 170 copies survive. It was not printed until in the nineteenth century, having circulated only in manuscript.

William Tyndale was the man who furnished the next version of the Bible for England. He was born about 1484, one year after Luther, in England, on the confines of Wales. When yet a

mere boy he was sent to Oxford to College, where he remained for some years engaged in diligent study. From here he went to Cambridge where he had superior facilities for the study of Greek and probably also Hebrew. These languages he studied with the sole purpose of using them to acquire a thorough knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. For even from a child he had loved God's Word, and during all his life he gave himself to its study. In 1519, at the age of thirty-five, he went to live with Sir John Welsh, a wealthy country gentleman, who employed him as tutor to his children. At the same time he preached whenever an opportunity offered itself. He proclaimed the Gospel in its purity and severely denounced the errors and corruptions of the Roman Church. By this course he drew upon himself the enmity and opposition of the Roman priesthood. His position thereby becoming ever more uncomfortable, he

concluded to transfer his residence to London, where he intended to devote himself to the translation of the Scriptures. Of this step he speaks later and says: "I perceived how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth except the Scriptures were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue. For else whatever truth is taught them, these enemies of all truth quench it again by their sophistry and by their misinterpretation of the Scriptures." It was in 1523, at the age of thirty-nine, that he went on his way to London, where he expected to be encouraged and aided by the Bishop who resided there, Tonstall, but in this he was bitterly disappointed. Tonstall turned him away coldly. The English Bible was not to be translated in a Bishop's Palace. But Tyndale found a friend in Humphrey Monmouth, a wealthy London merchant, who provided for him in his own house. Here again

his enemies assailed and persecuted him, and he discovered that England was not the country where he could successfully prosecute his work. He therefore decided to go to Germany. He left London in May 1524 and soon after landed in Hamburg. From Hamburg he journeyed to Wittenberg, where, it seems, he spent one whole year, during which time he translated the entire New Testament. Here he consulted Luther's translation and doubtless Luther himself, and was largely influenced by both. He copied Luther's prologues, and his marginal notes, as well as many portions of his New Testament. This fact has sometimes been denied, but it is confirmed by the best and most reliable authorities. His contemporaries unanimously testify that he got himself straight to Luther at Wittenberg. Whether he was in any way assisted by Luther is a disputed point, and there is no historical evidence that there was

any intercourse between them. It would be very strange, however, if during his year's residence in Wittenberg, and engaged in the same great cause, Tyndale and Luther did not meet, confer and co-operate in the work of translation. As Tyndale's work later became the basis of the authorized version of 1611, the Bible which we read at the present day, it is an evident fact that Luther is not only the author of the German version, but that he has also contributed a large share to the formation of the standard English version.

Demaus in his life of Tyndale has this: "In comparing the quarto of Tyndale's Testament of 1525 with Luther's 1522, the resemblance in respect of printing is remarkable. The appearance of the page is the same, the arrangement of the text is the same, and the references in the margin are also the same, and, what is more important to be noticed, the marginal notes intro-

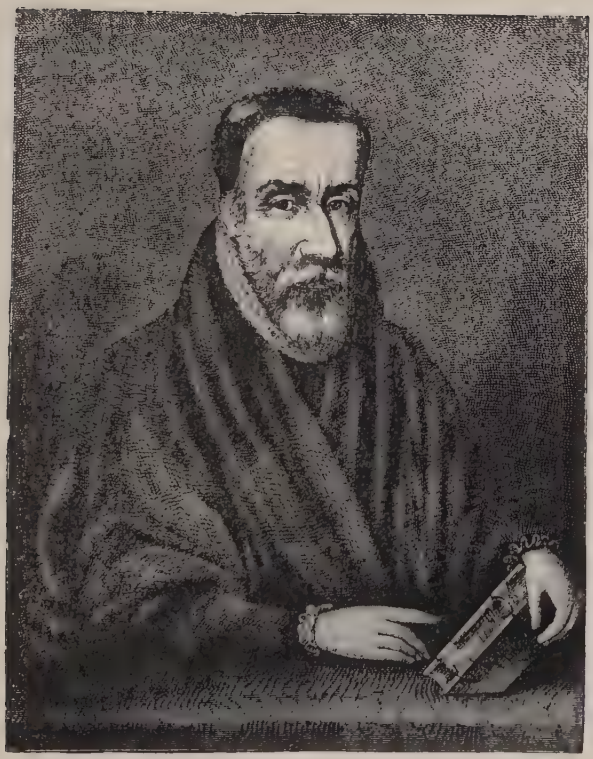
duced in the quarto edition, are to a large extent translations from those of Luther."

We cannot pursue this subject any further in this connection. That would carry us too far from the purpose and plan with which we entered upon our present labor. The reader who is interested in this special point is directed to "The Lutheran Movement in England", a scholarly work by H. E. Jacobs, D. D., LL. D., where the subject is fully and impartially treated.

From Wittenberg Tyndale in 1525 returned to Hamburg, where resided wealthy English merchants, who befriended and aided him, and from whom he may have received on this visit the means to defray the expenses of the publication of his translation. At all events, he went direct from Hamburg to Cologne where he found publishers with whom he entered into contract to do his printing. All progressed favorably,

when Cochleus, that savage persecutor of the Reformers, arrived in Cologne and discovered what was being done to supply England with the Scriptures. He informed the ecclesiastical authorities in England of his discovery, and through the efforts of their emissaries Tyndale's printed copies were confiscated. Tyndale, however, had learned in good time the secret machinations, and had saved the larger portion of the printed sheets, with which he fled up the Rhine and landed in Worms, a Lutheran city, where he could prosecute his labors in safety and peace. Here he finished the work begun in Cologne, and issued a second and improved edition of his New Testament. Followed and watched by his enemies wherever he went, he nevertheless escaped their vigilance, and succeeded in importing many thousand copies of his New Testament into England, where they were eagerly bought and extensively circulated.

To be within a convenient distance from England in order to superintend more successfully the shipping and sale of his book, he went from Worms to Antwerp. Here he was residing when, in 1535, the intelligence reached him that the King of England had severed his connection with Rome, and was favoring the Reformation. Hitherto he had passed under an assumed name, and thereby had insured his personal safety. On receiving the above news he imagined all danger passed, and resumed his proper name. This led to his discovery, his betrayal, his arrest, and his imprisonment. From 1535 to 1536 he was incarcerated in the castle of Vilvorden near Antwerp, where in the latter year he was strangled and his dead body was reduced to ashes. He had reached his fifty-second year. Faithful to the last, never doubting his mission, not wavering in what he conceived to be his duty, Tyndale died the death of a martyr in



W. Tindale.

one of the holiest causes to which he could have devoted his life. His name will live and his influence will be felt as long as time lasts. Nor was his tragic end to him an unexpected event. Long ere it occurred he wrote to a friend: "They may burn my books and me too, as they no doubt will." He died with a prayer for his enemies upon his lips. The crime of his murder must be laid at the door of the English prelates, especially to that of Bishop Tonstall, his most unrelenting enemy, and to that of the emperor, Charles V.

In Germany Luther's translation at once became the standard version and has ever since remained so. The course of events was far different from this in England. Here there was a succession of versions, no less than nine in number, before the nation settled upon one of them as of supreme authority. They are:

1.	The Wycliffe Bible.....	1382
2.	The Tyndale Bible.....	1525
3.	The Coverdale Bible....	1535
4.	The Matthews Bible....	1537
5.	The Tavener Bible.....	1539
6.	The Great Bible.....	1539
7.	The Genevan Bible.....	1560
8.	The Bishop's Bible.....	1568
9.	The Standard Bible....	1611

1. THE WYCLIFFE BIBLE.

The Wycliffe version had no successor as had subsequent versions. No one ever attempted to thoroughly revise and improve it. It passed on down the years unchanged, both in form and in substance. At last but few copies of it remained, and these were neglected and forgotten. The Reformation drew it forth again from its hiding place. Tyndale got possession of it, consulted it, and copied from it extensively. Through his translation many words and phrases, which Wycliffe had orig-

inated, have passed into the authorized version, where they remain to this day, and in which the Reformer still speaks to us. Wycliffe, like Luther, enriched and improved his native tongue, by his translation, and in these additions he still lives and speaks. His labors were not spent in vain, though they seemed so for a time. They have borne rich and lasting fruit. England owes Wycliffe no small debt. His memory should ever be cherished by Englishmen with reverence and love.

2. THE TYNDALE BIBLE.

Tyndale's translation includes the whole of the New Testament and the Pentateuch and the Book of Jonah of the Old Testament. These were the parts he published. He also translated from Joshua to II Chronicles, probably after he had published the former. This latter portion remained in manuscript, and after his death, passed into other

hands. His translation was faithfully and carefully made from the original Hebrew and Greek, but not without the assistance of the Vulgate, the Wycliffe, the Lutheran and other versions. To the prologues and glosses, which he had copied from Luther, he added some of his own. The latter being severely polemic, gave offense to the priesthood of England.

Tyndale's Bible formed the basis of all subsequent editions. The American Standard edition avows in one of the prefaces, that the foundation of the New Testament Version was laid by William Tyndale. The Rev. C. Hamilton Beard says of it: "The influence of Tyndale's work on our standard English Version can scarcely be exaggerated. Respecting that part of the Bible which he translated it has been estimated that no less than 80% of his translations has been retained in the Old Tes-

tament, and 90% in the New." The authors of the English revised New Testament of 1881 say of the authorized version of 1611: "The foundation was laid by William Tyndale. His translation of the New Testament was the true primary version. The versions that followed were either substantial reproductions of Tyndale's in its final shape, or revisions of versions that had been themselves almost entirely based upon it." Dr. Jacobs says that the latest version of the Bible is but a revision of Tyndale's translation.

Readers of the English Bible owe an inestimable debt to Tyndale, and secondarily, through him to Luther.

3. THE COVERDALE BIBLE.

Tyndale had intended to translate the entire Bible, but did not live long enough to accomplish his cherished object. Miles Coverdale, an Augustinian

Monk and a pretty fair scholar, completed what Tyndale had left incomplete. The parts he supplied he translated, not from the original languages, but from the Vulgate, and from Luther's German. No special importance attaches to his version, unless it be that he gave to England the first complete Bible of the 16th century. He was the author of many words and phrases of lasting worth.

4. THE THOMAS MATTHEWS BIBLE.

This Bible was a compilation of Tyndale's and Coverdale's translations. It was edited and published by John Rogers under the name of the Thomas Matthews Bible. Rogers was a graduate of Cambridge and an ordained clergyman. He had been a friend of Tyndale, and with him Tyndale had left his unpublished manuscript translations from the Hebrew of the Old Testament from

Joshua to II Chronicles. With this and Tyndale's Pentateuch and his New Testament, and Coverdale's translation, Rogers formed the Matthews Bible. He made no translation himself. His work was that of an editor only. His Bible had the distinction that it had the endorsement of the king, who before this had been opposed to the translation and reading of the Scriptures in the vernacular.

5. THE GREAT BIBLE.

This was simply a revision of the Matthews Bible, with a few additions from the Latin Vulgate. It received its name from its size, being a large folio, and was designed chiefly for pulpit use. It has also been called the Cranmer Bible, but the only agency that Cranmer had in the making of it was that he favored its publication, and wrote for it an introduction.

6. TAVERNER'S BIBLE.

This edition was the work of Richard Taverner, a layman, lawyer, and a good Greek scholar, but no Hebraist. His work was a mere revision of the preceding versions. A few changes made in the New Testament became permanent. Taverner made himself to be remembered by Lutherans, through his translation of the Augsburg Confession, which was the earliest copy of it in the English tongue.

7. THE GENEVAN BIBLE.

This name was given to this version for the reason that it was executed and published in Geneva, Switzerland. Its authors were men who had fled from England during the reign of Queen Mary, the bloody persecutor of Protestants, and had found an asylum in this city. It was a revision of previous versions, and issued in 1560. Having been

framed under the eyes and by the assistance of Calvin, it partook of the peculiar views of that reformer. Its marginal notes were strongly Calvinistic in tone and substance. and some of its translations gave ground for the charge of Roman Catholic critics "that English Protestants corrupted the text for dogmatic ends."

The Genevan Bible bears evidence of sound scholarship, though not without faults. It enjoyed a popularity which lasted for many decades, even beyond the time of the King James translation of 1611.

8. THE BISHOP'S BIBLE.

This was the last of the Bibles of the 16th century. It made its appearance in 1568. It was the work of Anglican Bishops. Its basis was "The Great Bible." Marginal notes of a controversial character were excluded. Owing to its ornate and artificial style, it was never

popular, although it had the sanction of the highest authorities in church and state.

9. THE AUTHORIZED VERSION.

This was undertaken in 1604 under the order of King James I, and executed under the supervision of the Anglican Bishops. Like those preceding and those following it, it was a revised version. Unlike the Lutheran Version it was the work of many minds. Fifty-two theologians were employed on it, chosen for the purpose by King James. They divided into six companies. Each company had a part assigned to it, and each member of that company translated that part. When done they compared and corrected the result of their labor. After this each company's work was submitted to a representative committee for final correction and decision. Thus we see, very great care was taken to produce an accurate translation.

These translators were men of the best scholarship, and of sound judgment. They labored with painstaking industry, and with upright purpose, for nearly three years, and published their work in 1611. While not faultless, it has been pronounced by friend and foe, "as the finest specimen of our prose literature at a time when English prose wore its stateliest and most majestic form." Though stately and majestic, it is a work of great simplicity. Ninety per cent. of its words are Saxon. For three hundred years it has continued the Bible of the English speaking people and is yet in use throughout the wide world where our language is known and spoken.

10. THE REVISED VERSION OF ENGLAND.

The Authorized Version of 1611 gave general satisfaction. For a long time no demand for a new and improved Bible was heard. Meantime many and

great changes took place. The English language underwent changes. Words changed their meaning. Some words became obsolete and dropped entirely out of the vocabulary. New words came into use. The discovery was made that some passages had been incorrectly rendered; others were awkward and ungrammatical. Additional manuscripts of the Greek text had been discovered, giving new light. The science of textual criticism had come into being. Ancient geography had been studied and was better understood; the countries and localities mentioned in the Bible had been visited and explored; cities and buildings long buried had been rediscovered; ancient inscriptions had been deciphered and translated. Volumes of light had been thus thrown upon the sacred record since 1611, and it was felt that the whole version needed a thorough revision. Accordingly in 1870 a committee of revision was chosen in England

to perform this labor. To this there was added a committee of American scholars. These two parties co-operated harmoniously, and as a result of their labor they published in 1881, a revised New Testament, and in 1885 a revised Old Testament, the two constituting the Revised Bible of England. The latter is not entirely faultless, nor is it as complete as it could have been made. The translators acted with great caution, making fewer corrections than their own judgment approved, fearing to offend the English people, whose conservatism is averse to Bible changes. Still it is difficult to conceive how any fair-minded and intelligent person can fail to recognize the vast superiority of the English Revised Version over all others that have gone before.

11. THE REVISED VERSION OF AMERICA.

This is not a distinctive revision, but merely a recension or improvement of

the Revised Version of England. It has changed obsolete for modern and intelligible words, which the English Version left untouched. Of this the following are samples. Minish, it has rendered into diminish, chapter, into capital, couches into sittings; straitness into distress, chapmen into traders, wot and wist into know, poll thee into cut off thy hair, delicates into delicacies, charger into platter, cunning into skill, let into hinder, and reins into heart. There are a few words in the Old Testament which to modern ears are indelicate and offensive, which have been left unchanged in the English Revision, as e. g., bowels standing for the affections, has been changed into heart. Numerous other changes have been made, in all of which the American version is a vast improvement on the English. There remains not the least doubt of the American Recension of 1901 coming nearer to the original, being clearer in its expres-

sion and phraseology, more readable and refined than any version heretofore made, or any version now existing in the world.

People will do well to overcome their prejudices in favor of the old Bible of 1611 and when ready to purchase a new copy, secure one of the Revised Version of 1901.

„Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehr
Vergehen nun und nimmermehr."

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